

Sleep, darling Kathleen in God's sheltered garden
We lay thee, little flower!
Lifting once more our weary earthly burden
Till comes the blessed hour
When death, the healer, bounteous and mild
Shall give to us once more our fairest child

'When I was close to Kathleen I felt I was near a Saint' Bro Conway.

This quote comes from Christian Brother Anselm Conway who came to know orphaned Kathleen Kilbane in a TB sanatorium in Ballinrobe, Co Mayo in 1940's Ireland.

Bro Conway wrote a remarkable account of the last fifteen months of her life which is published as 'No More Tears in My Eyes'. He records Kathleen's inspiring faith and kindness to others regardless of her own personal suffering. This account continues to touch the hearts of many today.

This new book contains the findings of research into the lives of both Kathleen and Bro Conway. Research that has uncovered Kathleen's real birth date and includes Kathleen's moving obituary written by Bro Conway, a forerunner to his later account. An in-depth and uplifting biography of Bro Conway is included. The book also reveals accounts of how Kathleen continues to influence people's lives today. This includes healings and other manifestations of alleged miraculous events attributed to Kathleen's intercession.

**The above poem was written by Brother Conway and included in Kathleen's obituary published 1947*



Kathleen Kilbane: The 'Little Saint' of Achill Island



Kathleen Kilbane: The 'Little Saint' of Achill Island

By Victor Kennedy & Allan Worthy

Edited by Dominic Kennedy



**Kathleen Kilbane: The 'Little Saint' of Achill
Island**

by Victor Kennedy

&

Allan Worthy

Edited by

Dominic Kennedy

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Published by Dominic Kennedy

Book cover by Dominic Kennedy. Photos by Allan Worthy

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Any profits made from this book will go towards promoting the book or to various charities that will benefit those who find themselves alone and in need.

The price of the book is what it costs Amazon to print each copy. The high price tag is because the book contains a lot of colour photographs. The only profit made by the authors will be a matter of cents/pence, as to make a profit from Kathleen's name is of no interest to us.

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For Kathleen

Whose faith and love have touched all our hearts.

Preface

It was Sunday the 9th of October, I had arranged to have the mass offered for little Kathleen in my church. As Kathleen's name was being read out, my attention turned to the gospel that day. It was about the 10 lepers that Jesus had cured. Only one came back to say thank you. The day before, a Mass card for little Kathleen arrived at my home. That person wanted to say thank you.

Victor Kennedy, February 2017

Introduction

Some years ago while reading a copy of the Alive newspaper, the title of a book, 'No More Tears In My Eyes' caught my attention. So much so that even after I had put the paper down, I could not get it out of my mind. Something kept telling me to send for the book, which I did. I read it many times and was very moved by her story. Each time I read the book the urge to make Kathleen known to the world grew stronger. I knew then I had to do something. I felt her pushing me on. I found myself talking to her, then praying to her and by doing so I knew I had to go to her grave in Achill Island.

My son Dominic, who lives in Germany with his German wife and daughter, came over on holiday in 2013. We decided to go to Achill to Kathleen's grave. And I think for the first time in my life I became one very humble man. To stand in front of her grave, to see the tokens of affection that previous visitors had left for her, to pray at her final resting place surrounded by the beautiful wild landscape of Achill, I was very moved.

We tried to make a little film on the spot. I had prepared a letter that I wanted to read out to her and to the camera to tell the viewer a little bit about Kathleen and to tell her how much she meant to me. As I spoke the words, "Kathleen said, 'It's very lonely in the graveyard if nobody comes to you. When I am dead will you talk to me just like you used to talk to me here.'" Tears welled in my eyes and my voice broke. I struggled to contain my emotions. After a short pause I continued reading the letter. I didn't want to let her down.

I've always been the classic definition of a man, reserved, aloof, hard-headed, some would say pig-headed, but Kathleen has reached out and touched me and in doing so changed my life forever. For those who would like to see a man brought down to earth and made humble, it's on film, thanks to Dominic.

Each Sunday at Mass a candle burns for Kathleen, I make sure of that.

For this little girl has brought light into the lives of so many people. Numerous people have wrote to me to say they pray to Kathleen each day, for it is only through praying to her that things will happen that will set Kathleen on the road to sainthood.

The following book contains findings of new research on the life of Kathleen and Brother Conway. My aim is to continue researching to gain more information on their lives and to continue to gather accounts on how lives have been touched by Kathleen's inspiring faith. I hope to publish these stories in a second publication. In this first volume my aim is that we come to know Kathleen and Brother Conway more and see how lives continue to be influenced by them today.

Note: We don't give out that first film on DVD anymore, though it is available to watch on Youtube. It is called, 'In Memory of Kathleen Kilbane.'

Victor Kennedy, February 2017





Stills from the film, In Memory of Kathleen Kilbane

1: The ‘Little Saint’ of Achill Island

By Allan Worthy

A Brief Life

Kathleen Kilbane was born to Irish emigrant parents Patrick and Mary, who originally came from Achill Island, Co Mayo. Kathleen was born on the 8th of September 1933 in Perth, Scotland. Kathleen's mother Mary died of TB on the 11th of June 1937. Her father Patrick placed Kathleen and her brother Martin in Smyllum Orphanage, Lanark, Scotland.

Kathleen had been unwell for sometime so in December 1945 Kathleen and her older sister Bridget Ann went to live with their Granny on Achill Island. Here it was discovered that Kathleen had TB, the same disease that claimed the life of her mother. On the 12th of July Kathleen was taken to Creagh sanatorium, (also known as St. Teresa's) Ballinrobe and it was here that she lived out the final fifteen months of her life. Kathleen Kilbane died at the age of 14 on the 7th of October 1947. Such are the details of her brief earthly life.

Note: for new information on Kathleen's birthday and year see following chapter, 'Kathleen's Real Birthday'

Brother Anselm Conway

Kathleen's life could have passed by little noticed and unrecorded. It is to Christian Brother Maurice Anselm Conway that we owe a debt of gratitude that this never happened. Brother Conway was a superior at the Christian Brothers Monastery in Ballinrobe, Co, Mayo. He made regular visits to Creagh sanatorium to visit the patients and it was here he made the acquaintance of Kathleen Kilbane. Brother Conway wrote an account of his friendship with Kathleen about a year after her death. This account has been published by 'Alive! Publications' under the title 'No More Tears in My Eyes'. It is through this account that we get to know the heart of Kathleen Kilbane.

In his account Brother Conway states that “When I was close to Kathleen I felt I was near a Saint.” What was it about Kathleen that caused Brother Conway to believe this so?

With All Your Heart

Kathleen’s love of God is evident in many ways. Her life experience was such that her soul remained in its childhood purity. Although Kathleen was a daily communicant in Scotland her illness prevented this in her last days. While being unable to attend daily Mass she followed the service in her prayer book while lying in bed where she also received Holy Communion every Sunday. To be present at one more Mass was an ardent wish that was not to be fulfilled.

Kathleen had a special devotion to the Mother of God. She was observed praying her favourite prayer, the Holy Rosary, countless times and this inspired many to emulate her. When Kathleen requested a ribbon for her hair, Brother Conway was informed, in no uncertain terms, that it must be “wide and blue” because “blue is the Blessed Virgin’s colour.”

Unto Others

From the moment Kathleen arrived at Creagh sanatorium she was regarded as a “ray of sunshine” and a model patient. Her engaging smile endeared her to staff and patients alike and she was ready to assist the nurses on their daily rounds. A parish priest, Canon Fergus, once gave Kathleen a large pious picture. Kathleen said “it is too good for this place; I will send it home to my Granny.”

On one occasion Kathleen was given a half-crown. She asked Brother Conway if this was a lot of money. She compelled him to take it and told him “you have given me a lot of things and I have given you nothing. You must take the money, and don’t buy me anything with it. Buy something for yourself.”

Always with You

Kathleen experienced many trials during her life, not least of these was the experience of loneliness. TB was something to be avoided at that time. People were hesitant to visit and even receive letters from a TB victim. Kathleen loved to write letters and this extract of one of her letters to Brother Conway describes her loneliness well: "I am keeping well but I am very lonely after you. I miss you very much. I was crying all day after you. I cried so much that there were no more tears left in my eyes."

Kathleen once asked Brother Conway what was it like to visit a town and what was it like to live in a family. Brother Conway did much to lessen Kathleen's feelings of loneliness. He wrote her many letters which caused Kathleen to "bounce up and down with joy." On his regular visits he told Kathleen many stories and played many games. The boys from the Christian Brother's secondary school, at which Brother Conway taught, sent Kathleen Christmas presents and staff and patients at the sanatorium always put Kathleen high on their list. But nothing was too much trouble for Brother Conway when it came to Kathleen. When Kathleen was having trouble eating she expressed that she might be able to eat some jelly. Brother Conway arranged for a local woman to make some for Kathleen. It was returning from the errand to deliver the jelly on a cold dark and rainy night that Brother Conway records that he felt no fear as he found "a special comfort in an empty jar I was carrying back to get filled, a jar that had contained jelly to ease the hunger pains of a sick child."

But there was a deep longing in Kathleen, a longing for a mother's embrace. Brother Conway asked the woman who made the jelly to visit Kathleen. As she sat on Kathleen's bed, Kathleen moved ever closer to her, culminating in a huge bear hug. As she lay quiet in the woman's arms all who witnessed this were deeply moved.

The Shadow of Death

In April 1947 Kathleen was first told by a nurse of the possibility of her impending death. When Brother Conway asked Kathleen "If God wants you to die will you be satisfied?" To this Kathleen made a remarkably mature response. "I will always do what God wants. But I am still going to

pray to get well so that I can grow up.” But by August Brother Conway noted that the TB had moved to a more advanced stage. Kathleen’s eyes had become sunken and her skin was drawn. For days she could not hold down solid food.

Kathleen as Intercessor

Kathleen’s friend and fellow patient Rita had come to visit her. Rita had suffered from migraines for a long time which no pill or potion could cure. Kathleen told her that she had prayed for her. From that very day Rita attests that she suffered no more from the headaches that plagued her.

Brother Conway had asked Kathleen: “Suppose people asked you for something, would you mind going to God and asking for it?” She thought for a little while before she replied, “I don’t know, I am not sure until I get there. I might be afraid to go to God, but I know I would not be afraid of the Blessed Virgin, and that is what I will do. I would ask her and she would ask God. And I will always remember those who were good to me.”

Brother Conway went on to ask: “What about those who did not know you were here and who would have helped you if they had known?”

And then she made this extraordinary statement: “Anybody who will hear about me and who will like me, I will help them too. I will help them to be always good.”

Last Hours

When Brother Conway came to visit it was a mild October day. Kathleen was alone in the ward as the other patients’ beds had been moved to the veranda to get some air. Kathleen was still lucid, but the pain was acute. The spark of life was leaving her. Brother Conway carefully folded the blue ribbon he found on her locker and placed it in his pocket, saving it from being dumped along with her other belongings, as was the custom with the possessions of a deceased TB patient. It grew late and as Brother Conway left he turned and a last look passed between them. At 2.00am that night an expectant look came into Kathleen’s eyes as she passed into the next life.

Bring Flowers of the Rarest

When Brother Conway arrived the matron took him to the mortuary where Kathleen's body had been taken. A large number of distraught patients had gathered to pray and touch Kathleen's body with their prayer books and beads to keep as relics. Kathleen's body lay with her rosary beads wrapped around her fingers and her prayer book by her side. Her most treasured possessions. Kathleen's face was caught in a smile as if she had seen a vision at the point of death.

As the matron and Brother Conway returned from the mortuary they noticed a large single white rose on a bush. The matron remarked that it was very unusual as she has not seen a rose on that bush before and that it was an unusually large blossom for that time of year. They plucked the rose and returned to Kathleen to give it to her as a present, a white rose of purity.

Arise Little Girl

Kathleen Kilbane, who throughout her life had a deep devotion to the Mother of God, was born on the 8th of September 1933 the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and died on the 7th of October 1947 the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary.

Kathleen is buried in Kildownet cemetery near Cloughmore on the intensely beautiful Achill Island, Co Mayo. She once asked what family life was like. She needs no one to tell her now as she is with her Heavenly Father and Her Blessed Mother. Kathleen Kilbane the 'Little Saint' of Achill Island, pray for us.

An Eternal Friendship

Kathleen gave Brother Conway a lock of her hair. He said that years later it was "as fresh and glossy as it was on the evening it was cut." Kathleen had promised Brother Conway that she would "be always waiting" for him. The waiting was over on the 12th of November 1982 when Kathleen Kilbane and Brother Anselm Conway were eternally

reunited in paradise.

Note: To read Brother Conway's full account of Kathleen, see, 'No More Tears in my Eyes: The Story of Kathleen Kilbane' by Bro. M.A. Conway, edited by Fr. Brian McKevitt OP.

*The book is available through the Alive! Newspaper;
Alive!
St. Mary's Priory
Tallaght, Dublin 24
Ireland*

It can also be purchased online at Achilltourism.com and other online bookshops. You can also ask your local bookshop to order a copy.

NO MORE TEARS IN MY EYES



THE STORY OF
KATHLEEN KILBANE

Bro. M.A. Conway

2: Kathleen's Real Birthday

By Allan Worthy

It was a few days before Christmas 2016. I had an afternoon spare and decided to go on the computer and do a little research on the life of Kathleen Kilbane. I thought I would start at the beginning and see if I could locate a copy of her birth certificate. I first tried many of the well known sites that hold such records. I entered the date September the 13th 1934 as stated in Brother Anselm Conway's account of Kathleen's life. Nothing was coming up with this date. I then went to a site which specializes in Scottish births, deaths and marriage certificates. I entered the date but again I had no joy.

I was on the point of giving up when I made one last ditch attempt. I put in Kathleen's name and tried a range of years between 1933 and 1935. One file came up as a possible. The site did not allow access to the whole document, but gave the following details; Kathleen Kilbane, Female, 1933, Perth. Although it was not the year stated in Bro Conway's account I thought I would take a chance and order a full copy of the certificate to be sent through the post.

When it arrived it was clearly the birth certificate of Kathleen Kilbane. The father was listed as Patrick Kilbane and the mother as Mary Kilbane nee Campbell who were Kathleen's parents and the place of registration was Perth where Kathleen was born. But the year was 1933 and not 1934 which makes Kathleen 14 years of age when she died and not 13 as stated on her headstone.

As I looked at the birth certificate in more detail I noticed another discrepancy. Kathleen's birthday on the birth certificate is September the 8th and not the 13th as stated in the Brother Conway account. As these facts began to sink in a thought occurred to me. As Kathleen, who had such a deep devotion to the Mother of God, had died on the 7th of October which is the Feast of Our Lady Of The Rosary, I wondered if the real day of Kathleen's birth, September the 8th, was a special day. I went to my calendar and looked at September the 8th and read; the Feast of

the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary! My legs nearly went from under me. Kathleen Kilbane shares her birthday with the Mother of God!

For all of Kathleen's life she was unaware of this. She told Brother Conway regarding her up and coming last birthday in this world that "the 13th is my birthday, sure you won't forget." As Kathleen was orphaned at a young age I can only surmise that this error began at an early stage in her life. Kathleen who loved the Blessed Virgin must have had a great surprise when she entered Heaven to be told that she and the Blessed Virgin celebrated the same birthday.



Extract of an entry from the REGISTER OF BIRTHS in Scotland

1933. BIRTHS in the District of Perth in the County of Perth

No.	Name and Surname.	When and Where Born.	Sex.	Name, Surname, and Rank or Profession of Father. Name, and Maiden Surname of Mother. Date and Place of Marriage.	Signature and Qualification of Informant, and Residence, if not of the House in which the Birth occurred.	When and Where Registered, and Signature of Registrar.
520	Kathleen Kilbane.	1933 September Eighth, 8h30m. am, Royal Infirmary, Tibbermore, Perth.	F	Patrick Kilbane, Bricklayer's Labourer. Mary Kilbane, m. J. Campbell. 1926 November 15 th Perth.	Patrick Kilbane Father. 30 Long Causeway Perth.	1933. September 22 nd Perth James Bridges, Registrar.

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08003160

Kathleen's birth certificate

Certificate courtesy of the National Records of Scotland, scotlandspeople.gov.uk

Name and Surname: Kathleen Kilbane

When and Where Born: 1933, September, Eighth, 8h30m. am, Royal Infirmary, Tibbermore, Perth.

Name, Surname and Rank or Profession of Father: Patrick Kilbane, Bricklayer's Labourer.

Name and Maiden surname of Mother: Mary Kilbane, M. J Campbell.

Date and Place of Marriage: 1926, November 15th, Perth.

Signature and Qualification of Informant, and Residence, if out of the house in which the birth occurred: Patrick Kilbane, father, 30 Long Causeway, Perth

When and Where Registered, and Signature of Registrar: 1933 September 22nd, Perth. James Bridges

3: Kathleen's Baptism: St John the Baptist Church, Perth, Scotland

By Allan Worthy



Image courtesy of Lis Burke-geograph.org.uk (CC BY-SA 2.0)

St John the Baptist Church was built in 1832 in Melville Street, Perth. The Church soon found itself at the centre of a large, mostly poor, Irish community. People gathered around the church so as not to lose their cultural and religious identity in a hostile environment. Irish Catholicism with its less rigid approach to the faith, replaced the more austere faith that was already prevalent.

The First World War had enabled Catholics to move up the social scale by offering skilled employment. It was during this period and shortly before the economic downturn of the 1930's that Mary Campbell and Patrick Kilbane, Kathleen's parents arrived in Perth. They were married in St John the Baptist Church, Perth on the 15th of Nov 1926.

(Page 130.)

1926. MARRIAGES in the District of Perth in the County of Perth.

No.	When, Where, and How Married.	Name (in full) of Parties, with Signatures. Rank or Profession, and whether Bachelor, Spinster, Widower, Widow, or Divorced.	Age.	Usual Residence.	Name, Surname, and Rank or Profession of Father. Name, and Maiden Surname of Mother.	If a Previous Marriage, Signature and Rank or Profession of Mother, and if previous and Address of Witnesses. If an Irregular Marriage, Date of licence of Bachelors, and where it was granted.	When & Where Registered, and Signature of Registrar.
259	1926. on the <u>fifteenth</u> day of <u>November</u> at <u>St John's Roman</u> <u>Catholic Church</u> <u>Perth</u> After Publication and Banns: According to the Form of the Roman Catholic Church.	<u>Patrick Kilbane</u> <u>Patrick Kilbane</u> <u>Blacklay, in Labour</u> <u>(Machinist)</u> <u>Mary Campbell</u> <u>Mary Campbell</u> <u>Yarn Workers</u> <u>(Spinners)</u>	25	<u>28 Meal</u> <u>Winnel</u> <u>Perth</u>	<u>Martin Kilbane,</u> <u>Partner</u> <u>(deceased)</u> <u>Bridget Kilbane,</u> <u>In S. Doyle</u> <u>John Campbell,</u> <u>Master</u> <u>Annie Campbell,</u> <u>In S. Campbell</u>	<u>signed</u> <u>Patrick Kilbane</u> <u>Patrick Kilbane</u> <u>John Kilbane</u> <u>John Campbell</u> <u>Thomas Kilbane,</u> <u>Kilmarnock, Ayrshire</u> <u>Witness</u> <u>Bridget Macdonald,</u> <u>Kilmarnock, Ayrshire</u> <u>Witness</u>	1926, <u>November 18th</u> <u>Perth</u> <u>James Bridges</u> <u>Registrar</u>

Certificate courtesy of the National Records of Scotland, scotlandspeople.gov.uk

Kathleen's parents marriage certificate

Mary Kilbane gave birth to her daughter Kathleen on the 8th of September 1933. It was also at St John the Baptist Church Perth, that Kathleen was baptized. Her mother's sister, Catherine Campbell, was one of her Godparents. It was on the 1st of October 1933 that Kathleen entered the fold of the Catholic Church. It was the gift of this faith that sustained Kathleen throughout her brief earthly life and it is to this faith that her life so beautifully attests.

No	SURNAME	CHRISTIAN NAME	BORN	PLACE OF BIRTH	PARENTS
76	Kilbane	Kathleen	8 Sept. 1933	(20 Laurenceway) A. Infirmary	Patrick Kilbane Mary Campbell

1933

BAPTISED	PRIEST BAPTISING	SPONSORS	REMARKS	CONFIRMED
1 st Oct 1933	John M. C. Daniels	Thomas Kilbane Catherine Campbell	Septuagesima	—

With kind permission of St John the Baptist church, Perth.

Kathleen's Baptism certificate

There are parallels between the life of Kathleen Kilbane and St Therese of Lisieux. Both died at a young age from tuberculosis, both led exemplary lives of faith. They both shared a deep love for the Blessed Virgin. Kathleen spent her final days at St Teresa's Sanatorium. Teresa is

the anglicized way of spelling Therese. Both Kathleen and St Therese wanted to spend their time in Heaven doing good on earth. So it is quite remarkable that Kathleen Kilbane was baptized on 1st of Oct which is the feast day of St Therese of Lisieux!



Saint Therese of Lisieux in 1886 when she was 13 years old.





With kind permission of St John the Baptist church, Perth.

This is the actual baptismal font that was used to baptise Kathleen Kilbane in 1933. The font first came to St John's church in 1893. It came originally from a dismantled chapel called Our Lady of Good Counsel in Tulliemet, a small village 35kms from the city of Perth, known historically as Tullymet.

The font is a goblet shaped structure. On it are seven carved images symbolising; Jesus, Our Lady, Angels and the four Evangelists. Also recorded on it is the date 1855. It has a brass rim which has an

inscription in Latin which says, 'Go therefore teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and teach them to observe all I command you.'

4: Kathleen Orphaned: Smyllum Orphanage, Lanark, Scotland

By Allan Worthy



Reproduced by kind permission of Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul

When Kathleen's mother, Mary Alice Kilbane, died on the 11th of June 1937, Kathleen was three years and eight months old. Kathleen, along with her brother Martin were initially sent to live with their aunt Nellie in Dundee. Kathleen's father Patrick then placed Kathleen and Martin in Smyllum Orphanage, Lanark, Scotland.

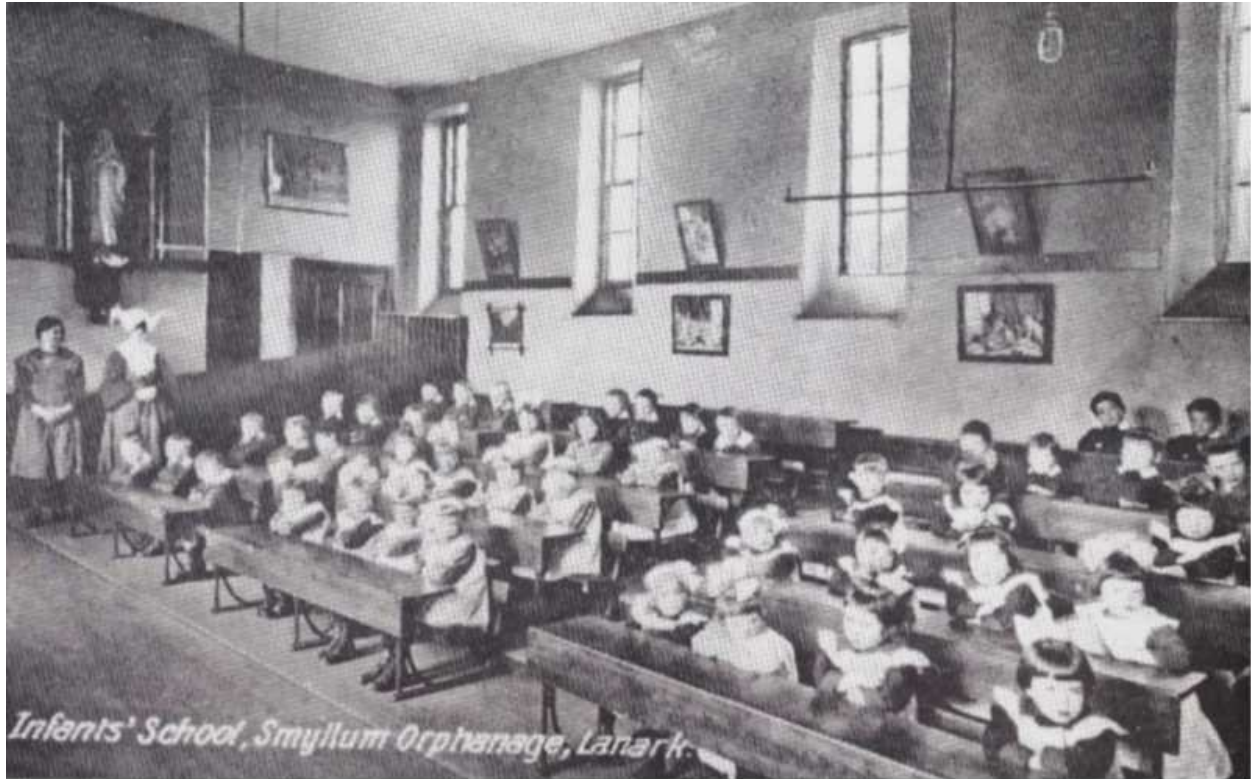
1937. DEATHS in the District of Perth in the County of Perth

(1.)	(2.)	(3.)	(4.)	(5.)	(6.)	(7.)	(8.)
No.	Name and Surname, Rank or Profession, and whether Single, Married, or Widowed.	When and Where Died.	Sex.	Age.	Name, Surname, and Rank or Profession of Father. Name, and Maiden Surname of Mother.	Cause of Death, Duration of Disease, and Medical Attendance by whom certified.	Signature and Qualification of Informant, and Residence, if not of the House in which the Death occurred.
356							
350	Mrs. Alice Hillbom. Married to Patrick Hillbom, Bricklayers, Falloway.	1937, June Eleventh, 11.30 p.m. City Hospital, Perth. Usual Residence :- 10 Hunter Crescent, Perth.	F	31 years	John Campbell, Broiler, (deceased), Annie Campbell, née Campbell (deceased).	Phthisis, as cert'd by G. P. Stewart M.D.	Patrick Hillbom Widower, 10 Hunter Crescent, Perth. (Perth.)
360							

Certificate courtesy of the National Records of Scotland, scotlandspeople.gov.uk

Kathleen's mother death certificate

Smyllum House was built about the year 1800 by Lord Armadale. The Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul first came to Lanark in 1860 and later Sister Teresa Farrell became aware of the large number of Catholic children whose circumstances rendered them homeless and often orphaned. By 1883 the number of children under the care of the sisters was 381.



Infants' School, Smyllum Orphanage, Lanark.
Ownership of Smyllum later passed to the Misses Carmichael of Eastend (an estate near Thankerton). In 1864, the house was sold to the Roman Catholic Church who founded an orphanage and school run by the Sisters of Charity from St. Mary's. This, and the following two illustrations are from a booklet of 12 postcards of the orphanage probably issued around 1910.

Reproduced by kind permission of Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul

It was during the two World Wars that the demands on the Sisters reached their peak. Kathleen would have been in residence at Smyllum Orphanage circa 1937 -1945.

The Smyllum Orphanage Admissions Register 1927-1946 holds scant information on Kathleen. It only lists her name, date of baptism and parents names. The Daughters of Charity archivist has remarked that this was unusual. While the Daughters of Charity were dedicated to giving the children a happy home, Kathleen once said "You know I could not talk to them and tell them when I was sick, like I could tell my own mammy." Holidays were the hardest for Kathleen when other children went to their homes or homes of relatives, Kathleen remained bounded by the four grey walls of the convent. It was in Dec 1945 that Kathleen's sister Brigid Ann took Kathleen with her to live with her Grandmother on Achill Island, Co Mayo, Ireland. Which was to be destined to be a brief stay. Later, the Daughters of Charities' concern for Kathleen extended to making a trip to

Ireland to see her when she was in Creagh sanatorium.



Reproduced by kind permission of Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul

5: Kathleen Confirmed: St Mary's Church, Lanark, Scotland

**By
Allan Worthy**





Image by kind permission of St Mary's Church, Lanark

St Mary's Church

It was while at Smyllum Orphanage that Kathleen was confirmed. This took place at the local church of St Mary's. The first church opened in the parish in 1859. From this time up until 2006 the parish was under the care of the Vincentian Fathers.

Confirmation Day

At the age of ten Kathleen was confirmed in St Mary's church on the 8th of October 1943. The church was a ten minute walk from Smyllum orphanage. The record of her confirmation contains an error as Kathleen's Christian name is recorded as Catherine. This is not an unusual occurrence as the scant records that remain of Kathleen's life contain many errors. But what is clear is the name that Kathleen chose for her confirmation name. It is another example of Kathleen's devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Kathleen chose the name of her Heavenly Mother, Mary.

CONFIRMATI ab Illustrissimo et Reverendissimo Domino *Henrico S. Graham* Episcopo *Leban*
die 8 mensis *Octobris* anni 1943 quae fuit

Nomina Confirmatorum.	Nomina Parentum.	Nomen in Confirmatione impositum.	Nomen Patrini vel Matrinae.
<i>Doreen Smith</i>	<i>Ethel Smith</i>	<i>Mary.</i>	
<i>Kathleen Kilbane</i>	<i>Patrick Kilbane & Mary Campbell</i>	<i>Mary.</i>	
<i>Mary Townsley</i>	<i>Joseph Townsley & Mary Young</i>	<i>Margaret.</i>	
<i>James Neil</i>	—	<i>Elizabeth.</i>	
<i>Theresa Cassidy-Wedlock</i>	<i>Matthew Wedlock & Theresa Wedlock.</i>	<i>Mary.</i>	
<i>Maria Madeline Londette</i>	<i>Charles Londette —</i>	<i>Monique</i>	
<i>Lucile Lepretre</i>	<i>Alfred & Beate Lepretre.</i>	<i>Cecile</i>	
<i>Katette Baquet</i>	<i>Benjamin Baquet —</i>	<i>Bernadette</i>	
<i>Georgette Sargent</i>	<i>Jules Sargent & Juliette Sargent</i>	<i>Agnes</i>	
<i>Jacqueline Vicant</i>	<i>Jacques Vicant —</i>	<i>Anne</i>	
<i>Edmonde Leroy</i>	<i>Edward Leroy —</i>	<i>Genevieve.</i>	<i>FRENCH</i>
<i>Dorothee Gricot</i>	<i>Roland Gricot & L. Roux</i>	<i>Catherine</i>	<i>RUFUS</i>
<i>Maria Rose Doherty</i>	—	<i>Martha</i>	
<i>Louissette Pourre</i>	<i>Francis Pourre</i>	<i>Martha.</i>	
<i>Monique Peta</i>	—	<i>Theresa</i>	
<i>Imene Dollet</i>	—	<i>Madeline</i>	
<i>Rose Pourre</i>	<i>F. Pourre —</i>		

Certificate by kind permission of St Mary's Church, Lanark

(Kathleen is second from the top)

In the year of Kathleen's confirmation, 1943, the Second World War was still raging. By being confirmed, Kathleen became what a generation ago would have referred to as a 'Soldier of Christ.' Confirmation imparts an increase in sanctifying grace consisting in the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, notably, the strength and courage to confess boldly the name of Jesus Christ. The results of this special outpouring of the Holy Spirit were clearly evidenced in Kathleen's life.

To strengthen Kathleen's journey of faith at her time in Smyllum Orphanage, she was a daily communicant. A Vincentian Father would have gone to the chapel at Smyllum to say daily Mass. Kathleen's devotion to the Mother of God led her to a love of the Holy Rosary. The Church has traditionally regarded October as the month of the Holy Rosary. It is to be noted that many dates throughout this month were key

dates in Kathleen's life. The 1st of October saw Kathleen baptized, the 8th her confirmation and the 7th saw her passing. Also a year after her passing, Kathleen's beloved Grandmother Brigid Kilbane died on the 11th of October 1948.



Image by kind permission of St Mary's Church, Lanark

A First Holy Communion Mass, St Mary's Church

Kathleen and the refugees

Visible on the record of Kathleen's confirmation are listed the names of 12 French refugees. The refugee's journey to Smyllum Orphanage is a remarkable one. In 1940 British forces were holding Boulogne in France. It was the last major port town barring the German advance to the ports of Calais and Dunkirk. Ships that had taken troops to reinforce the defence of Boulogne, returned to Britain carrying men and women hoping to escape the encircled city.

Among those who were taken on the ships were four sisters of the Daughters of Charity and thirty two young girls from the Daughters of Charity orphanage on the Boulevard Daunou. On the 22nd of May as the ship HMS Venomous took on board its passengers, the nuns and children were among the first to board. They landed at Folkestone. Initially the nuns and children were sent to London. But when London proved too dangerous a place to be, the nuns and children were sent to Smyllum Orphanage, Lanark, Scotland.

The children were happy and well looked after at Smyllum and were in touch with their families in France via the Red Cross. At the orphanage the French children were taught together as a group. But one can easily imagine the kind and loving Kathleen exchanging a friendly 'Bonjour' with her fellow orphans from France. It was not to be until the end of the war in 1945 that the nuns and the children were to return to France.

6: Kathleen on Achill 1945-1946

By
Allan Worthy

“The island of Achill is known everywhere for its magnificent scenery. Here amongst the hills and bogs with their wonderful colouring, or along the sandy beaches, the visitor finds himself invigorated and refreshed.”

Archbishop Michael Neary, Archbishop of Tuam.



Image courtesy of Irishfireside-Flickr.com (CC by 2.0)

It was late 1945 that Kathleen's sister Brigid Ann took Kathleen out of Smyllum orphanage to live with her in Edinburgh. Then Brigid Ann took Kathleen to live with her Grandmother Brigid Kilbane on Achill Island, Co Mayo. The sisters at Smyllum Orphanage had noticed that Kathleen's health was ailing and it was thought that the fresh air of Achill would be good for her health.

Kathleen and her Grandmother

This time, living with her Grandmother, was to prove to be a special time in Kathleen's life. As her Granny could not speak any English, Kathleen learned Irish so as to be able to converse with her. The memories of this time stayed with Kathleen and brought her comfort and joy in her remaining days. Bro Conway records that Kathleen held two special memories that were precious to her.



Images Courtesy of Google

Granny's house as it is today (with modern extensions)

It is a long held tradition that local children would have gone to play in the woods near Bleanaskill. The woods were the only ones for miles

around. The small trail that runs alongside a stream hidden in the woods would have rang to the sound of children's laughter for generations.

Within a short walk of Kathleen's grandmother's house was a beautiful beach called the Strand. The part of the beach which local children would have played is to the right of the pier. From the beach her grandmother's house was visible. When the weather of Achill is kind and the blue water as still as a millpond it is a beautiful place to be. After Kathleen's birth in industrial Perth and her time in the convent at Lanark the freedom and beauty of Achill was a treasured foretaste of paradise for Kathleen.

Kathleen at Worship

Kathleen and her grandmother would have worshipped at a local church called Derreens Church (commonly known as Kildownet Church). This church was replaced in 1961 by the church which stands on the site today, The Church of the Sacred Heart. The church that Kathleen attended had served the people of Achill for 110 years. Mass-goers walked long distances to the old Kildownet Church. Also people crossed the sea from Currane and Achill Beg to worship there. The church was a very holy place where people found God in the sacraments and each other for generations.

Senior citizens recall the customs and practices at the old Kildownet Church during the days that Kathleen worshipped there. Elderly and mature women would have worn grey shawls to church while the young girls dressed in black. The centre aisle separated the men's side from the women's side. There was a magnificent marble altar in the church that was not preserved during the demolition.

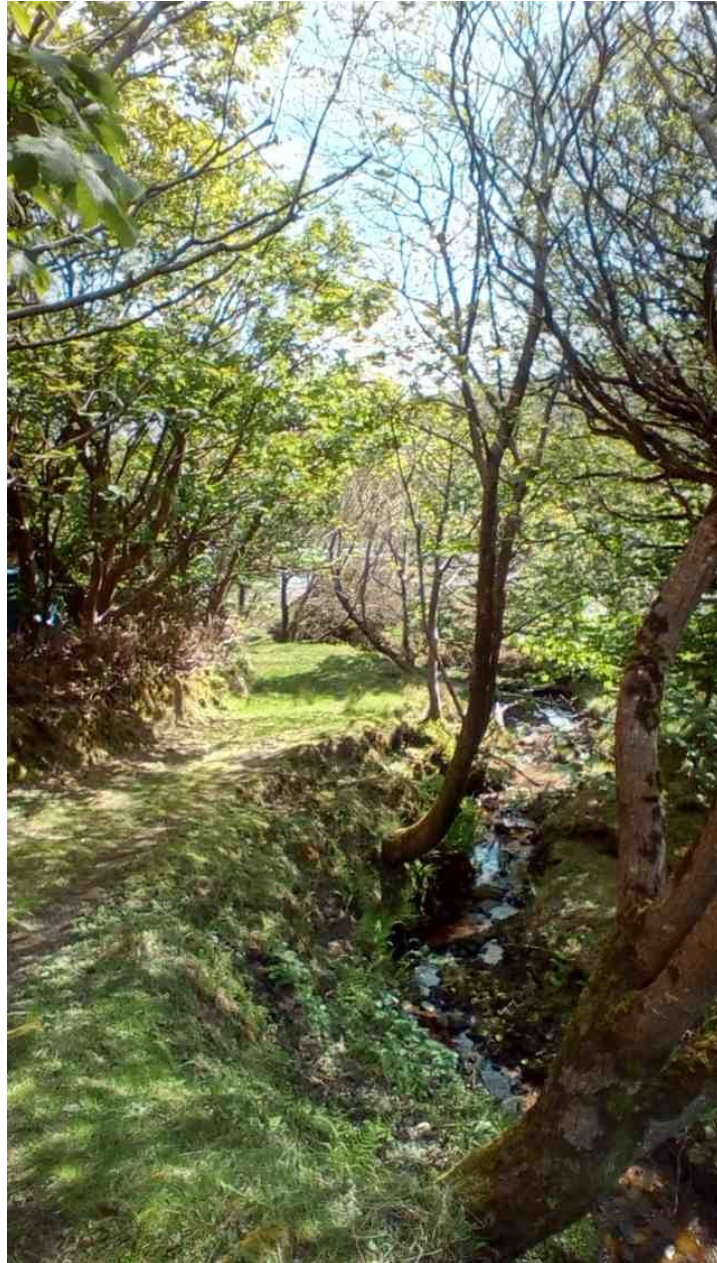
Kathleen in School

During Kathleen's time on Achill she attended Derreens National School. The school records shows Kathleen, Caitlin Nic Giollabain her name in Gaelic, attended the school from Monday the 19th of November 1945 until Friday the 10th of May 1946. Kathleen was in school for a total of 86 days.

A local Achill resident recalls going to school with Kathleen and remembers her as “a lovely girl.” She also remembers sending Kathleen a doll when Kathleen was at Creagh sanatorium.

Mary Gannon from Achill, who knew Kathleen when she was staying with her granny, writes; “I lived on Achill Bay Island and went to school there. I was about 9 yrs old when Kathleen came to stay with her Granny. I remember going, with my Father, to visit Kathleen at her grandmother’s house many times.

Kathleen was always very happy and loved to see us. I enjoyed seeing her very much. Kathleen had a lovely Scotch accent that was hard for me to understand sometimes. Although TB was such an infectious disease in those days and people dreaded it, I remember my Father, Johnnie Kilbane, and two of his sisters going to visit Kathleen at the sanatorium.”



Bleanaskill Woods, Achill



Image courtesy of Allan Worthy

The strand. Granny's house can be seen at far right of picture

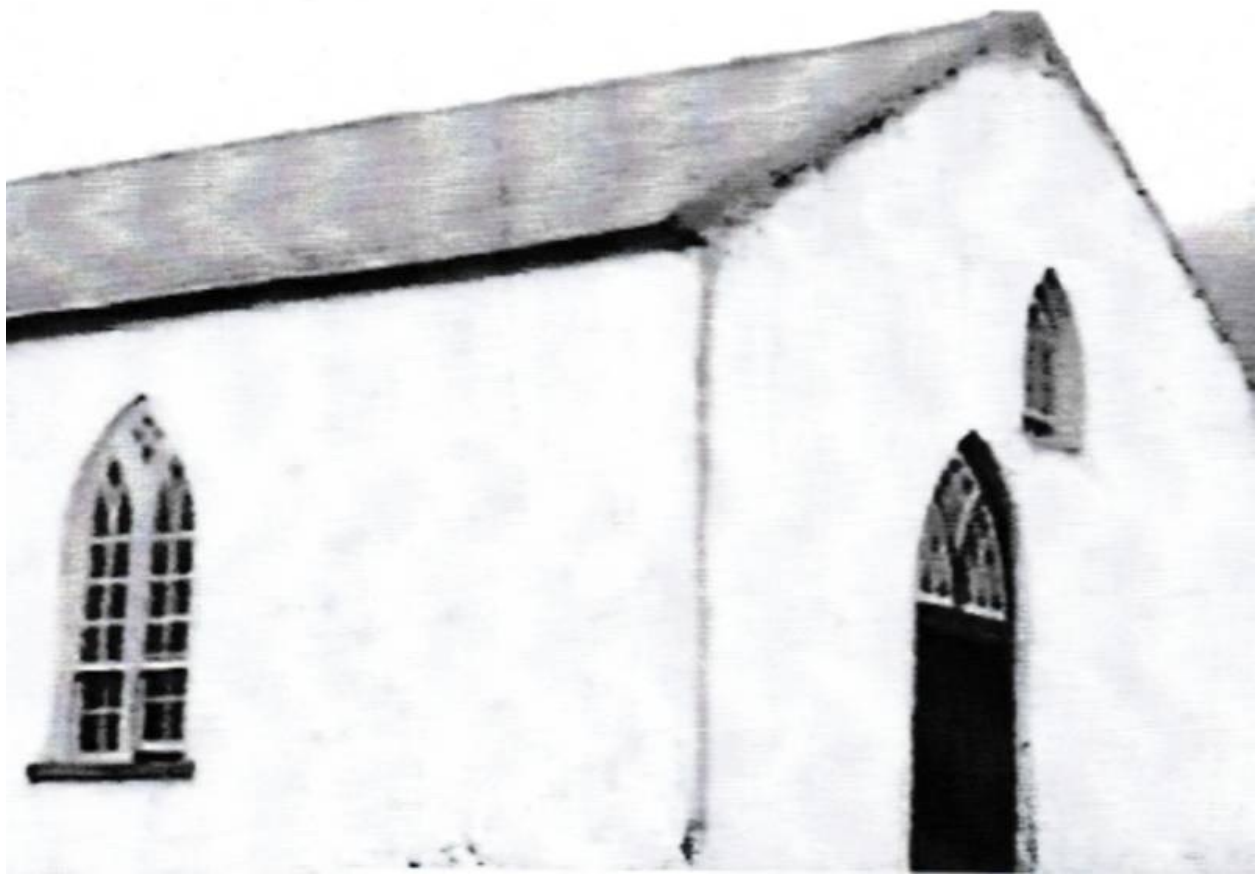


Image courtesy of Michael Patten, Achill

Derreens (old) Church



Image courtesy of Google Earth & DigitalGlobe

7: St Teresa's Sanatorium, Creagh, Ballinrobe. A Brief History

By Allan Worthy and Noelene Beckett Crowe



Reproduced with kind permission of Mayo County Library

Creagh House before it became a Sanatorium

In 1940's Ireland four thousand people were dying every year from tuberculosis. There was a stigma to the disease and it was rarely spoken of. Consumption, as it was called, described well the effect upon the victim. The victim was consumed by weight loss and breathlessness. It was spread by coughing and spitting, so public transport carried warning signs 'No Spitting Permitted.' The young, especially those from rural areas, had no immunity to infection. Treatment at the time was total bed rest, good food and plenty of fresh air. Sanatoriums were built to house those suffering from the disease. These were often built on the edges of towns and they usually had uncomfortable relationships with the local townspeople. As Brother Conway described them, they were, "outcasts from society." One such sanatorium was built in Creagh, Ballinrobe. This was situated two and a half miles from Ballinrobe. This was one of the

sanatoria funded by Dr Noel Browne during the 1940's.

There are two main buildings to Creagh sanatorium. Creagh House as it stands today was originally built by Colonel Charles Knox in 1875 and it became a sanatorium in 1928. The original Knox mansion first housed all patients, but was insufficient for the large numbers admitted for treatment. Creagh house still has the remains of a raised archway where the old hearses would drive into to remove the dead bodies. An addition was made in a purpose-built block building to house more patients. This building had one entrance, but had separate quarters for men and women. Two paths lead from the main building to where 2 huts stood. When a patient was approaching death they were taken there. Medical staff were housed in the old house and also in cottages along the driveway. There was also a house where a doctor lived on the avenue.

Today Creagh sanatorium is best known as the place where Kathleen Kilbane spent the last days of her life as recorded in the account by Brother Anselm Conway. The dangers of visiting TB patients were very real. The risks were highlighted in a Dail Eireann debate from Tuesday 2 July 1946, a year before the death of Kathleen. A politician stated that since Creagh sanatorium opened in 1928 four members of staff were found to be suffering from tuberculosis. The death toll at Creagh was high. The registrar's page for October, which records Kathleen's death, records three other deaths at Creagh, following in quick succession. Two men in their early twenties died, both on the same day, also a young lady shortly after, also in her twenties. But this did not deter Brother Conway. A man remembers serving Mass at Creagh House when he was young (not many parents allowed their children to do so because of fear of the illness.) The priest would give him coins. Also he remembers that he got breakfast that included sausages!



Creagh Sanatorium. Picture taken in 2013

It was into the antiseptic corridors of Creagh sanatorium that Kathleen first walked when admitted on the 12th of July 1946. She brought the light of her faith and love with her. Brother Conway remarked on how strongly he felt the presence of God in the place.

It was an Irish doctor, Dr Dorothy Stopford Price, who introduced a TB vaccine to Ireland. It was a year after Kathleen's death in 1948 that Dr Price persuaded Dublin Corporation to introduce the BCG vaccination to the city. It saved the lives of thousands of young children.



Rear of Sanatorium building. Picture taken in 2015

Creagh Sanatorium remained in use throughout the 40's and the 50's, later becoming a centre for the Department of Agriculture. It was in use up until the 1990's. During that time the records of the sanatorium were purposely destroyed by the department c 1972, so no one has any idea regarding the numbers who were treated in the buildings. Today the block building is decaying into ruins. Upon a recent visit it was an eerie experience to stand there and see the building which held the sorrows experienced there in its walls. But this was also the place where Kathleen Kilbane prayed and loved and left a light burning in this world that guides many to this day.

Note: Fear of contracting Tuberculosis did not stop Kathleen's uncle Johnnie Kilbane and his sister Julia and another aunt from visiting her twice at the sanatorium. It was uncle Johnnie who made the white coffin in which Kathleen was buried. He became friends with Brother Conway and helped him out with family facts and information when Bro Conway was writing Kathleen's story. Kathleen's aunt Julia ran the Post Office in Cloughmore. It was Julia who told Kathleen's granny of the x-ray results which confirmed that Kathleen had contracted T.B. And it was Julia who received the telegram from the sanatorium informing the family of

Kathleen's death.



Just a few yards away from the sanatorium where Kathleen's photo was taken, stands a large tree and on that tree someone carved a large cross all those years ago. It is still visible today.





New life at Creagh. Spring 2017

Image courtesy of Allan Worthy

8: The Late Kathleen Kilbane:An Obituary in an Irish newspaper, 1947

by Brother Anselm Conway

There is something holy and spiritual in the death of a young child, and Our Lord Himself, on beholding the dead twelve years old daughter of Jairus, remarked to the bystanders: "She is not dead, but sleepeth."

Yes, asleep in her purity and innocence long before the evil sordidness of the world took possession of her heart. Such was the case with regard to Kathleen Kilbane, the subject of this brief memoir.

Born in Scotland a little over thirteen years ago, she was deprived of her mother by death when she was only two years old. And the following nine years were spent in a boarding school for orphans in the large industrial city of Lanark.

Not being very robust, it was thought better to send her to relatives in Achill, in the hope that the country air would improve her health: but after some time it was diagnosed that she had fallen victim to the much dreaded disease T.B and in due course she was admitted to the County Sanatorium, Ballinrobe, which was to be the scene of her sufferings and patient forbearance for the ensuing fifteen months.

From the beginning she endeared herself to both staff and patients by her engaging smile, her willing readiness and her quaint expressions and ideas which befitted a more mature mind than that of a child of twelve.

She was delighted to be allowed to go around the wards with the nurse and, as she handed out the various medicines to the patients with a word of encouragement to each, she was like a ray of sunshine sent to enliven the otherwise drab monotony of their lives.

But soon the disease made such inroads on her constitution that she became confined to bed, and all through the sultry days of summer she bore her sufferings with heroic patience and her peculiar engaging smile lighted up her face whenever anybody stopped to talk to her.

Coming upon her unawares at times we discovered the secret of her patience. With her eyes closed and the beads slipping through her fingers, she repeated rosary after rosary to pass the time of her long lonely vigil. Her consideration for others never deserted her and she inquired each morning how each of the other patients was feeling and she had some of her sweets sent up to any patient whom she heard coughing more than usual.

Equal to her love of prayer was her desire for suffering. This slipped out unconsciously from her one day when worse than usual and a nurse had offered to give her a soothing drug.

"No nurse," she replied, although the tears welled up in her eyes.
"I want to suffer more for Our Lord."

And certainly Our Lord took her at her word for towards the end she became so weak that she was unable to stir in her bed and was always most grateful to anybody who settled her in a more comfortable position.

She never knew that she was dying and was conscious up to the end until she passed away peacefully on the morning of October 7th.

That day as we stood in the mortuary chapel and gazed on the waxen form dressed in white with a blue ribbon in her hair, we realised that we were in the presence of a saint and the chapel for the time being had become a holy and sanctified place. Her beads were twined around her fingers and her prayer books by her side, the two objects she loved most: while around her lay the green wreaths fashioned by her fellow patients, who were inconsolable at her death. A large white rose, which seemed to have blossomed forth specially for the occasion, lay on her breast. The white rose symbolic of the purity of the heart underneath.

Sleep, darling Kathleen in God's sheltered garden
We lay thee, little flower!
Lifting once more our weary earthly burden
Till comes the blessed hour
When death, the healer, bounteous and mild

Shall give to us once more our fairest child

Note: This obituary, published on Nov 1st 1947, can be seen as the seed that grew into Brother Conway writing down Kathleen's story, which he diligently copied into 5 or 6 notebooks and gave to his friends and members of Kathleen's family, and which became, 56 years later, the book - 'No More Tears in My Eyes: The Story of Kathleen Kilbane.'



Kathleen, Bro. Conway & Roscoe at Creagh Sanatorium

04208478

(Please note that all Copies made on this Page should be certified as foot.)

First Page.

Dómaine an Chonn-Clárúcháir (Superintendent Registrar's District)		Dómaine an Clárúcháir (Registrar's District)	
10.4.7. Ballymore		Ballymore	
Báirne Clárúcháir i gDómaine (Deaths Registered in the District of)		i gDómaine an Chonn-Clárúcháir (in the Registrar's District of)	
Ballymore		Mayo	
Marriage	Birth	Death	Admission
...

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
250	10th 7 Third October Clongowla		F	Married	76	old age	Pneumonia Cardiac Failure no medical attendant	Harry Marshall daughter present at death Clongowla	10th 7	Catharine C. Carroll
251	10th 7 Fifth October Ballymore duke		M	Bachelor	69	Farmer	Cardiac Failure no medical attendant	Patricia Martha present at death Clongowla	10th 7	Catharine C. Carroll
252	10th 7 Tenth October Kilnamoy		M	Widower	85	Farmer	Cardiac Failure no medical attendant	Patricia Martha present at death Clongowla	10th 7	Catharine C. Carroll
253	10th 7 Seventh November Ballymore		M	Married	83	Ex- R.I.C	Isaiah deceased no medical attendant	Joseph present at death Ballymore	10th 7	Catharine C. Carroll
254	10th 7 Twenty first November Kilnamoy		F	Married	80	old age	Isaiah deceased no medical attendant	Joseph present at death Ballymore	10th 7	Catharine C. Carroll
255	10th 7 Fourth November Ballymore		M	Married	63	Ex- Postman	Pneumonia Cardiac Failure no medical attendant	James Walsh son present at death Ballymore	10th 7	Catharine C. Carroll
256	10th 7 Sixth October Craugh	Kathleen Kilnamoy	F	Spinster	13	Labourer's daughter	Pulmonary Tuberculosis 1 year 10 mos Certified	A. Gibbons present at death Craugh	10th 7	Catharine C. Carroll
257	10th 7 Twenty fifth October Craugh		M	Bachelor	23	Labourer	Pulmonary Tuberculosis 2 yrs 2 mos Certified	A. Gibbons present at death Craugh	10th 7	Catharine C. Carroll
258	10th 7 Twenty fifth October Craugh		M	Bachelor	22	Labourer	Pulmonary Tuberculosis 4 yrs 4 mos Certified	A. Gibbons present at death Craugh	10th 7	Catharine C. Carroll
259	10th 7 Twenty October Craugh		F	Spinster	20	Farmer's daughter	Pulmonary Tuberculosis 6 yrs Certified	A. Gibbons present at death Craugh	10th 7	Catharine C. Carroll

I, Richard C. Carroll Registrar of Births and Deaths in the District of Ballymore in the County of Dublin do hereby certify that this is a true copy of the Registrar's Book of Deaths within the said District, from the Entry of the Death of Elizabeth Marshall No. 250 to the Entry of the Death of Mary Marshall No. 259.

Witness my hand, this 3rd day of January 1948.

Richard C. Carroll Registrar.

I have examined the above, and have compared it with the said Registrar's Book, and hereby certify that it is a true copy.

Witness my hand, this 9th day of January 1948.

T. Hamilton Asst. Superintendent Registrar.

Kathleen's Death Certificate

Certificate courtesy of irishgenealogy.ie



Kildownet Cemetery



Kathleen's grave, August 2016

Image courtesy of Malachy Rogan

9: Memories of the Year Kathleen Died

by Victor Kennedy

The year 1947 stands out in my memory. My father was a farm labourer and we moved around all the time to where the work was. A house always went with the job. Some of the houses were very poor, some with earth floors.

That year 1947 we were lucky to live in a good house outside Dundonald, which is very close to Belfast. It was also the year known as the big freeze, said to be the coldest winter in three centuries. It caused severe hardships. There were massive disruptions of energy supply for homes, offices and factories. Animal herds froze or starved to death. No one could keep warm, and many businesses shut down temporarily. When warm weather returned, the ice thawed and flooding was severe.

I was nine years of age at the time. At the rear of the house was a large sloped field and people came with their sledges to enjoy themselves. My brother and I made a crude sleigh out of a sheet of corrugated iron. Remember 1947 was just two years after World War 2, shortages were everywhere. I saw children like myself going to Dundonald School in their bare feet and pouncing on a crust of bread thrown away by another child. Look at the state of the world today, could it happen again?

In the last 3,500 years there have only been 230 years of peace. God has been cast aside. In 1947 a little girl left this world, no one cared because so many children perished in the war. She was only known to her family and the patients in the Sanatorium, where she brought a ray of light into that sorrowful place. They thought the world of her, so much so that they made wreaths for her, prayed for and to her when she died, touched her hands or her forehead with their beads or prayer books or holy pictures, which they treasured afterwards as relics.

Jesus said to Saint Faustina in her early years, "How long are you going to keep putting me off?" Now 70 years after Kathleen's death let us

not put her off any longer, by doing what she done, always helping people and by praying to her and asking for her help.



Kathleen at Creagh Sanatorium with Br Conway's dog, Roscoe

(Photograph from one of Br. Conway's handwritten copies, courtesy of Ann Gallagher, Ballinrobe)

10: Kathleen and Sister Philomena

By Victor Kennedy & Allan Worthy

At the foot of my bed I keep a framed photo of Kathleen beside a statue of the Virgin Mary, also beside it there are two other little statues. One is of St Therese and one is of St Philomena. Kathleen, St Therese and St Philomena all died young. St Philomena died around the same age as Kathleen.

Among the many letters I get from people was one from a nun in England, Sister Philomena. She told me of her great devotion to Kathleen and her many prayers to her. Sister Philomena told me she also keeps Kathleen's picture at her bedside and never goes out unless Kathleen's photo is in her handbag.

Also in the letter Sister Philomena requested that I pray for her as she had been ill for some time and was very concerned about an up and coming hospital appointment. Never in my wildest dreams would I have ever thought that a religious person would ask me, of all people, to pray for them! I turned to Kathleen and asked her to help me, as always she did. At that moment thoughts flooded my mind, have a healing Mass said for her.

Without delay I made contact with a small circle of Kathleen's devoted friends and asked them would they do the same. They did, it was during one of these healing Masses in Wales that the following little story, told to me by Allan Worthy, took place.

I contacted my local church last week and spoke to Canon John about having a Mass said for Sister Philomena. He said he would have one said the following week. On the weekend the parish newsletter informed me that the Mass would be on the Tuesday.

It was during this Mass that some remarkable events happened. The Gospel for that day was Mark 5 21-43. I stood to attention as Canon John read of the woman who suffered with the haemorrhage for twelve years

who was healed by touching the hem of Our Lord's garment. Also the passage told of how Our Lord raised Jairus's daughter.

The story of the healing of the woman with the haemorrhage was a perfect Gospel reading for a healing Mass and remarkable in that Canon John had not specifically had the Mass said on that day, but fitted the Mass in wherever he could that week. After Mass I mentioned this 'coincidence' to Canon John to which he remarked "how appropriate!"

In Kathleen's obituary, published in 'The Western People' Saturday, Nov 1st, 1947 which is reproduced in this book, the writer makes a comparison with Kathleen and Jairus's daughter. Although the obituary is unsigned it is obviously the work of Bro Conway.

The Gospel reading managed to have perfect relevance for both Sister Philomena's healing Mass and her devotion to Kathleen. But the story does not end here.

After Mass I spent time in Eucharistic adoration and then headed off to the local supermarket to do some shopping. I went to the automated teller machine to withdraw some money. I was having trouble removing my debit card from my wallet and had to dig deep to find it. Finally I thought I had hold of it and as I pulled up what I thought was my debit card I got a surprise. I was holding a long forgotten blessed relic card that I had bought in Knock which had not seen the light of day for over two years. The relic card was of Saint Philomena! It seems that friends of Kathleen Kilbane are in with the in crowd!



Sister Philomena

Image courtesy of Sister Philomena Dunning

11: 'Our Little Star in Heaven'

A Letter from Kathleen O'Rourke

This is another one of the letters from people who have a devotion to Kathleen. And how she came to affect their lives. It's from Kathleen O'Rourke, an Irish woman living in England, whose husband Jack is suffering from ill health. Around five years ago he was diagnosed with bowel cancer and then a year later he suffered a major stroke. He requires constant round-the-clock care. Mrs O'Rourke has found great comfort in knowing and praying to Kathleen. As she has said, "I just love her so much as if she was my daughter."

Dear Victor,

Thank you so much for your letter and cards of Kathleen. I was so happy to receive them. I talk to Kathleen every night before I go to sleep. I have told Kathleen that she helps me so much. I tell her all my fears and how it is so hard to cope with looking after Jack, God help him. Some days he doesn't know me or my son. It is hard.

You know Victor, I show my husband her picture and tell him to say a prayer to her and she'll help him. I find great comfort in her and she has given me strength, I'm not surprised she is helping people.

She is a saint, our little star in Heaven is watching over us. I also show her picture to people and tell them what I know about her. She has helped me also to believe in myself, as I had mixed feelings about what was happening to poor Jack, the way he is and also myself struggling to cope. But Kathleen came to me and I feel better. I always pray to her.

I feel so happy you got in touch with me. I believe Kathleen wanted me to have a friend like you. Every night I talk to her and tell her my fears about Jack. Also I love and believe in her so much. Yes, it is so hard with Jack 24/7, but my son John is so good. He takes us to Lourdes every year, but we haven't went since Jack got ill.

We are hoping to go home to Ireland in May, please God. And the plan is to go to Kathleen's grave. My son said he will take me, that is if Jack will be okay. God bless you, Kathleen O'Rourke.



Kathleen and Jack

Image courtesy of Kathleen O'Rourke

12: Patricia's Story

By Patricia McAuley

My name is Patricia McAuley and this is my story. I decided to walk in the footsteps of my patron saint for my 60th birthday. I set out for Ireland and visited Lough Derg, then on to Croagh Patrick for the last Sunday in July. I climbed the hill against my doctors advice because he told me I had arthritic changes in my right knee and would be better walking around the mountains instead of climbing them.

When I got down from the mountain I was limping and the next morning I was in agony, but it didn't stop me from visiting Kathleen's grave. It was my second visit as I had been there the previous year. I stepped up on the grave and, as it was so painful, I asked her to help me because I did not want to suffer for the whole holiday. I stepped down and expected the sharp pain, but it was gone and has never returned. That was 7 years ago.

I went to Medjugorje with a group of friends some time later and as I was walking along the street I looked up at the moon and saw Our Lady's face. As I looked I saw a girl appear on Our Lady's cheek and recognised Kathleen with her smile and blue ribbon. Others saw Our Lady but not Kathleen.

There were many more prayers answered, but for some of my patients while I was in nursing, people coming out of comas and hardened hearts were converted. Unfortunately I cannot impinge on their privacy and disclose them.

I visit Kathleen's grave every time I am in Ireland. One year I was over without my car and my sister Rosemary assumed driving duties. We were in Knock and I wanted to visit Kathleen's grave, but she was tired and said it was too far away. I then agreed to leave the visit until next time, but told Kathleen of my disappointment. Rosemary, who knows her way around well, unaccountably made some wrong turnings and we found ourselves on the road to Achill Sound. She did not know how she

managed to make the mistakes, but I did and I got my visit to Kathleen.



An Artists impression of what Patricia saw at Medjugorje by Jane Robertson

13: Noirin's Story

By Noirin Gannon

My name is Noirin. I am a relative of Kathleen. My grandfather was her uncle on Kathleen's father's side. I had heard stories of Kathleen but it was not spoken about much and I felt I wanted to know more. Thank God the 'No More Tears in my Eyes' book came out. As I read the book I could not help but have tears in mine. I was finally able to learn all about her.

At the age of 39 in 2003 (The year Kathleen's book by Bro Conway was first published) I was diagnosed with cancer. It was around this time, as I was beginning my treatment, that I first visited Kathleen's grave. I felt very down, believing that I was going to die.

As I came to the grave I saw a couple there who had come all the way from County Louth. I spoke to them. I told the woman why I was coming to the grave and as we spoke she said that she'd had the same treatment as me for the same type of cancer and she said that, "I'd be all right."

I knew then that Kathleen was with me and she had sent me a sign. That God and Kathleen had answered my prayers. The pressure on my shoulders and chest seem to lift and such a great warmth and sense of emotions rushed through me that I will never forget it.

I go to her grave often and I feel her with me and I get such a sense of peace. There is always a rosary said at Kathleen's grave on the anniversary of her death and it is a lovely occasion. I know I never really knew her, but in some way I feel I have her with me and I feel so proud. She is an Angel in Heaven.



Kathleen's grave, June 2017

14: Joe's Story

By Victor Kennedy

I have never been a smoker, but I've heard from many people over the years how hard it is to quit. Some do manage to break their nicotine addiction, using various methods like going cold turkey or reading Allen Carr's Easy Way to Stop Smoking, even using hypnotherapy. But one man from Killarney used the power of prayer to help him stop. It was to Kathleen he prayed. And she listened.

Joe Mulvihill was a life-long chain smoker who had recently started to suffer from chest and shoulder pains. He knew it was his body telling him to give up the cigarettes. He tried all the usual fixes, nicotine patches and gum. None of them eased his craving. Then he started to pray to Kathleen.

He carried her Prayer card with him in his wallet and every time he got a craving for nicotine, he took out the Prayer card and prayed. Each time he went to reach for a cigarette, he said in his own words, "Something was holding me back. All the doctor's bottles of pills and antibiotics didn't do what Kathleen did for me. I owe my cure to her. From the first time I saw a picture of Kathleen, I believed in her. August 2016 was the last time I smoked and now all my pains are gone, thanks to this 'Little Saint' of Achill."



Joe with his niece, Trisha

15: An Achill Prayer Vigil

By Allan Worthy

The last time I was at Kathleen's grave was September 2016. It was a windswept day but a visit to Ireland is not the same without a few words uttered at the Kilbane graveside. Achill is a truly spectacular place to be laid to rest and there is no one more deserving of this honour than Kathleen.

This particular day, for some reason, I missed the left turn for Kildownet Cemetery. I drove on for some time with the growing realisation that something was amiss. It was a route I had followed many times, but on this occasion got wrong. I decided to carry on as I had business at Keem Bay to do and would drop in on Kathleen on the way back.

The business I had in Keem Bay has its roots going back to around twenty years ago when I was visiting Ireland. I had got the notion to drive over to Achill one Sunday afternoon; this was before I became acquainted with the life of Kathleen.

My plan was to drive to Keem Bay and climb the cliff that sweeps so majestically into the Atlantic and read John's Gospel up to the point where Our Lord was laid in the grave. Then, as the sunset and darkness began to fall, descend to my car parked in the bay car park. There I would sleep the night in the car. Upon being awoken, by an alarm set to arouse me before dawn, I would then ascend the cliff once more to continue reading John's Gospel from the point of the resurrection as the sun rose and illuminated the sea.

But things didn't run as smoothly as I had planned. I arrived that afternoon on Achill and all seemed to be going well. But as I drove towards Keem Bay I suddenly realised that I had left my copy of John's Gospel in my suitcase which was currently in the bedroom of my uncle's farm in County Cavan. Unfortunately not having John's Gospel committed to memory I was temporarily at a loss. But not to be deterred I turned the car around and headed back to Achill Sound and thought I

may find a priest in the Church that would give me the loan of a bible to complete my task.

I had no luck there as all Masses had been said for the day so I went on to the next Church and again all Masses had been said for the day, so no priest. The outlook was looking grim as I knew the location of these two Churches only. On my way out of the second Church I stopped and looked at the CTS pamphlet rack. There was not much on offer but as I looked down the rack my eyes alighted on one copy of John's Gospel for sale. No copy of Matthew or Mark or Luke resided on that rack just one solitary copy of John which I held aloft in triumph while dropping the money into the box.

That experience will stay with me the rest of my days. Reading the Gospel as the sun set while the gathering darkness covered the sea and land created a powerful mood on the cliff edge. I then descended to my car. I left the window slightly ajar so I could listen to the sound of the Atlantic lulling me to sleep.



Image courtesy of pixabay.com (CC0 Public Domain)

The next morning I ascended the cliff before dawn and read of the resurrection as the sun rose and turned the sea into silver; dispelling the darkness as Our Lord had done bringing the light of His resurrection to the world. Maybe I was observed by our friend Kathleen and was known to her long before I knew of her?

As mentioned it was September 2016 when I last visited Achill. This time I decided I would go and climb the cliff once more and read John's Gospel again, but during the day this time as befits my advancing years. But after missing the turn for Kildownet Cemetery, I carried on to Keem Bay and did the reading and then came back to visit Kathleen. Maybe she sent me on to the bay first as the bad weather may have prompted me to retreat to Knock had I gone to the grave first and got a lashing by the wind and rain. It could have been Kathleen's way for getting good

order, 'honour the Lord first then come and see me.'

Small moments can say a lot and stay in the heart. On my way back from Keem Bay I wanted to be sure to get the right turning for Kildownet Cemetery this time. I saw a small post office and pulled in to ask. A lady was making her way to it and I asked her the directions. She set me on the right road and said you know you are on the right road when you have the rhododendrons on either side of you. That I could remember from my previous journeys. As I walked away she said something that was carried away by the wind. I walked back a few paces to ask her what she had said. She shouted 'You'll need your coat'. It is that concern for the stranger, 'seeing Christ in the stranger' that is a Christian trait well displayed by the Irish people and especially in that very special daughter of Achill, Kathleen Kilbane.



Keem Bay, Achill

Image courtesy of Jacinta Kennedy

16: The Pink Camellia and Brother Conway

By Viviana Fretes

After attending Mass on Padre Pio's day, (23rd September, 2016) my daughter and I went straight to the Saint Domingo Savio church in the city of Paraná where I live. We wanted to see the crying statue of Mother Mary, or to be more precise, La Inmaculada Madre del Divino Corazón Eucarístico de Jesús o la Virgen del Cerro, known in English as The Immaculate Mother of the Divine Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, or The Virgin of the Hill.

We did not expect to witness her crying, but wanted to visit her to pray and to venerate her. We sat in the first row, right in front of Her. Deep inside me, I was praying for a number of people, dead and alive. Kathleen was one of the first souls I had in my heart, but when I thought of Brother Anselm Conway and finished saying his name in my mind, a pink camellia fell from a vase full of flowers.

I knew immediately, that in this silent and peaceful church, it was a sign that not only Kathleen but also Brother Anselm himself were present.

I had an impulse to take the camellia with me, but considered it improper. How could I explain to the other people who were sat in the chapel praying and even queuing to touch the Virgin and/or to pass some pieces of wool around her face, though no tears were running along her cheeks at the time, that the flower had been a holy code, a sign between Brother Anselm and myself? How could I pick up that delicate thing which belonged to the Virgin Mary!

On the following day I returned with the purpose of taking the camellia with me if it was faded or left aside. However, the pink flower was still as fresh as the day before and someone had placed it in a little candle holder. Again, I gave up my intentions. I left the place thinking I had to be satisfied only with that sweet memory... and I have to confess, I regretted not having taken it with me.

While writing about this anecdote I searched on the internet for a picture of this holy statue, when, to my surprise, I came across the photo that showed the very camellia as fresh as I had first seen it, still in its branch and in the vase. The picture must have been taken a short time before Brother Anselm 'caused it to fall' as a sign that he had heard my prayers. Strange as it may sound, I do not see the little Virgin as sad, as she is seen in the photograph. Instead, a sweet smile is next to the pink camellia.

Note: About 4 or 5 years ago a local man from Paraná paid a visit to the city of Salta, attracted by the apparitions of 'The Mother of God' to Maria Livia Galliano de Obeid. He visited the shrine dedicated to the Virgin and bought the Immaculate Mother of the Divine Eucharistic Heart of Jesus - la Inmaculada Madre del Divino Corazón Eucarístico de Jesús (Virgin Del Cerro)- statue and placed it in his home when he arrived back in Paraná. He then noticed the statue crying, and as it cried it gave off the smell of roses. He contacted his local priest at the Saint Domingo Savio church and told him that, "The Virgin asked me to bring her." The statue was placed in the small chapel which sits to the side of the main church. There it has attracted many worshippers.



The Immaculate Mother of the Divine Eucharistic Heart of Jesus statue in Saint Domingo Savio church, Paraná, Argentina. The pink camellia can be seen in the vase of flowers





Inside the small Chapel. If you look closely at the top picture you can see Kathleen's prayer card beside the statue



Saint Domingo Savio church. 2nd image is the small Chapel beside the Church

17: Kathleen's Blue Ribbon

By Victor Kennedy

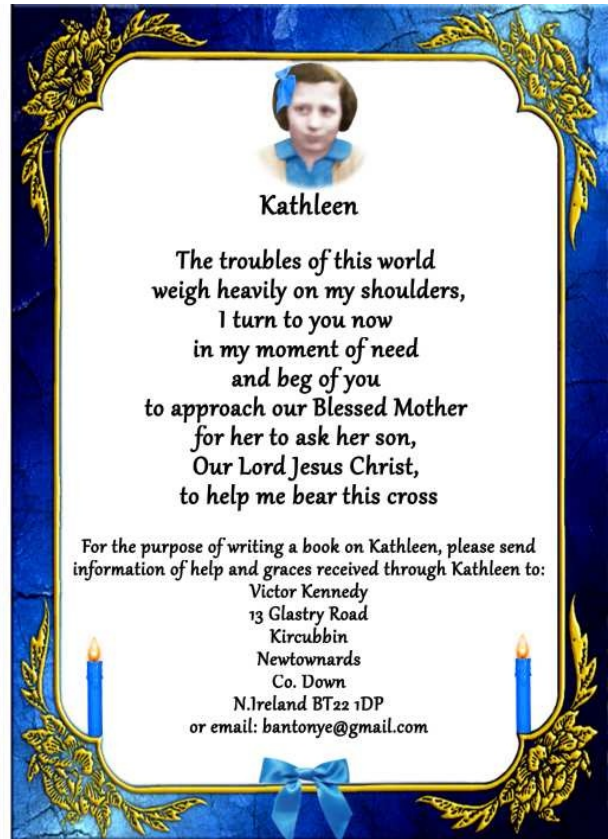
Fr. McKevitt chose the title well, 'No More Tears In My Eyes' to edit the story of Kathleen Kilbane by Bro. Conway. For I remember about three years ago a man from Tipperary writing to tell me his story about the book. He said, "Whenever I lend the book to my friends to read I always put a 50 euro note inside it with a little note saying, 'If you don't cry while reading this you can keep the 50 euros.' But the 50 euros always came back."

I remember again a lady from Ballinrobe telling me face to face, "I saw hard drinking men break down and cry while reading it."

I will always remember what Bro. Conway wrote, "There is something peculiar about an October evening, with its little nip of frost in the air, which makes far away sounds like the lowing of a calf or the chattering of a stream sound so near and distinct. In a golf links not far away people were enjoying themselves, life in the town went on as usual, men bought and sold, drank and sang songs, and just because the world went on as usual made it more strange to be sitting alone with a dying child."

Dear reader, perhaps sometime in your life the same happened to you as you sat by the bed of a loved one whose life was drawing to a close and how many of us are good at suffering pain? Bro. Conway tells us when the nurse came to give Kathleen a Morphine injection, she blurted out, "But I don't mind suffering. I want to suffer more for Our Lord." Then she blushed because she realised she had let out her secret, that she was satisfied to suffer if God willed it.

Why don't we carry in our pocket or purse a little piece of blue ribbon to remind us of how brave this little girl was.



Card designed by Dominic Kennedy. Prayer by Victor Kennedy

Kathleen Prayer card

As Kathleen and Bro Conway are non-canonized, all prayers reproduced in this book are for private devotion only in accordance with the teaching of the Church.

18: Kathleen on Film

By Dominic Kennedy

My father gave me a book to read. It was called 'No More Tears in My Eyes – The Story of Kathleen Kilbane' by Bro. M.A. Conway. It was a shockingly sad and moving story, once read, never forgotten. My father then asked if I would come to Achill Island with him to visit Kathleen's grave and to bring my video camera.

Apart from the letter my father wanted to read out to Kathleen at her grave, a mix of biographical detail for any future viewer of the film we were making and a personal message to Kathleen, we didn't really have a plan as such for the film. As my father then spoke a Chaplet of Divine Mercy, I filled the screen with images of the cemetery where Kathleen is buried.

One of the most arresting sights at Kildownet cemetery is the jumble of stones and boulders littering the graveyard, marking where victims of the Irish famine lay buried. I made a point of showing them in that first film, and in 2 of the further 3 films we made about Kathleen we again featured and expanded upon these sad monuments to Irish history. We also made our way to Bro. Conway's grave in Ballinrobe and to Creagh Sanatorium where Kathleen spent her final months. We called that first film, 'In Memory of Kathleen Kilbane.'

When I again visited my father the following year, we went back to Kathleen's grave. Our mission this time was to try and tell her story more comprehensively. One of the highlights of this trip was getting to see one of the 5 or 6 handwritten copies of Bro. Anselm's story and in amongst its pages to find an unpublished photograph of Kathleen sitting on Bro. Anselm's knee.

This time I had my daughter Sophie play Kathleen for the dramatized scenes in the film. She continued to play Kathleen in a further 2 films. She has the perfect innocence for the part. An innocence that we nurture and cherish. We are in no hurry for her to grow up, we want her to take

her time and enjoy her childhood. Now is the time for childish things, superheroes and social media, make-up and fashionable clothes, dating boys and mobile phones can wait.

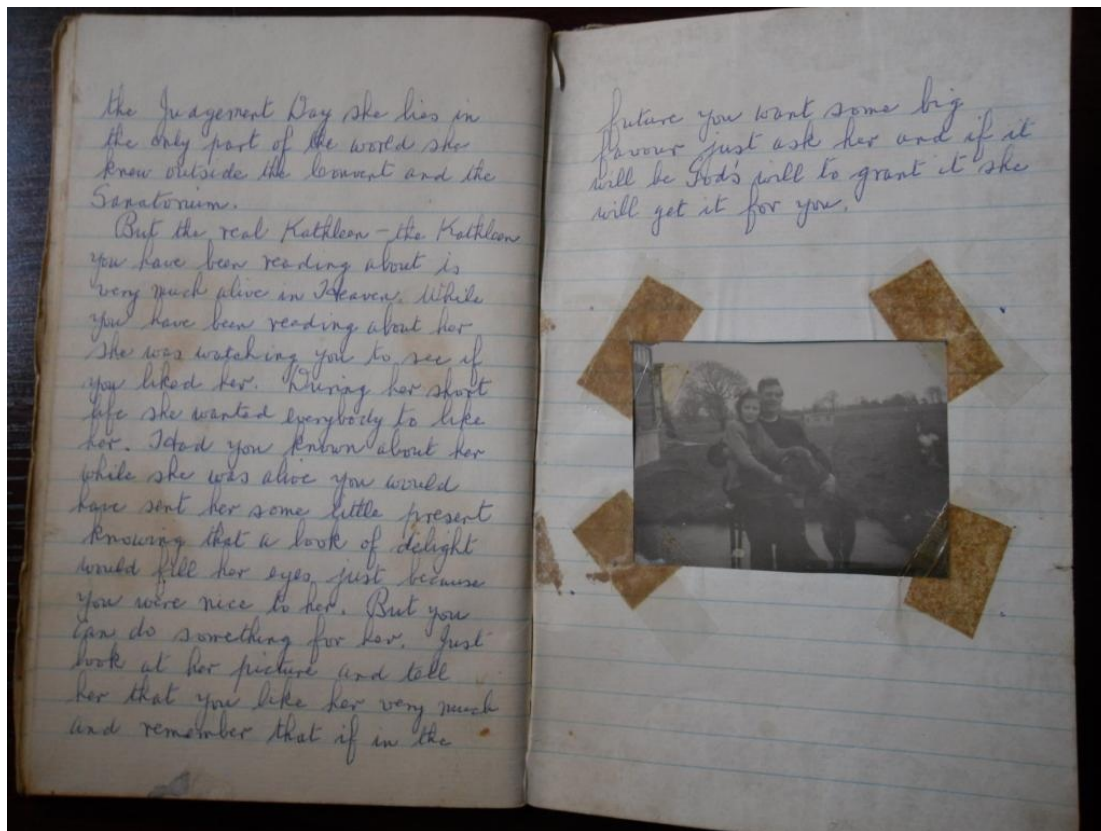
It takes about 2 to 3 months of editing to piece together each film. Thousands of images are viewed, searching for just the right one to help tell the story. Hundreds of stock film/video clips are scrutinized, countless pieces of music listened to, to find the right tune to lay over each particular scene. And all the while Kathleen's memory card and her Prayer card sit propped up against my computer monitor, helping me to make the right choices, helping me to make the best film that I can.

Altogether we have made four films on Kathleen, there's the first one I've already mentioned, followed by 'Kathleen Kilbane: The 'Little Saint' of Achill Island.'

Then there's my personal favourite, 'Kathleen Kilbane and Brother Conway' which we then followed with 'Reflections of Kathleen Kilbane.'

There are also two supplementary short pieces, 'Kathleen Intercede For Us: Praying at the grave of Kathleen Kilbane' Which is pretty much as it says, my father and 2 friends praying at Kathleen's grave. And 'Creagh Sanatorium' which is raw unedited footage of the interior and exterior of the purpose-built blockhouse at Creagh used to house the patients. All the films can be viewed on Youtube.

I think there is one more film left to make about Kathleen. That is a dramatic feature film with actors portraying Kathleen and Brother Conway. Maybe someday I will get the chance to make this, the ultimate film about Kathleen, that can be seen in cinemas around the world and beamed into people's living rooms. Only then can I rest easy.



the Judgement Day she lies in the only part of the world she know outside the convent and the Sanatorium.

But the real Kathleen - the Kathleen you have been reading about is very much alive in Heaven. While you have been reading about her she was watching you to see if you liked her. During her short life she wanted everybody to like her. Had you known about her while she was alive you would have sent her some little present knowing that a look of delight would fill her eyes just because you were nice to her. But you can do something for her. Just look at her picture and tell her that you like her very much and remember that if in the

future you want some big favour just ask her and if it will be God's will to grant it she will get it for you.



One of Brother Conway's handwritten copies



Sophie and Victor at Kildownet Cemetery, between takes on Kathleen Kilbane and Brother Conway film



Victor helping Sophie prepare for a scene for Kathleen Kilbane and Brother Conway film

19: Kathleen on Film 2

By Victor Kennedy

When we set out to make the films on Kathleen, we decided because of cost to keep it within the family circle. My son Dominic's daughter, Sophie, who is German and lives in Garmisch near the Austrian border with her German mother, Bettina and Dominic, was chosen to play the part of Kathleen because like Kathleen she was so innocent and fitted the part well.

While filming 'Kathleen Kilbane and Brother Conway' we went to Cong in Co. Galway, yes the same place The Quiet Man film was made, to shoot the scene by the Cong river of Sophie spreading the blanket on the ground. So many times we tried to shoot that scene, but each time the wind would come up and blow the blanket about as Sophie tried to lay it on the ground and we would have to start all over again.

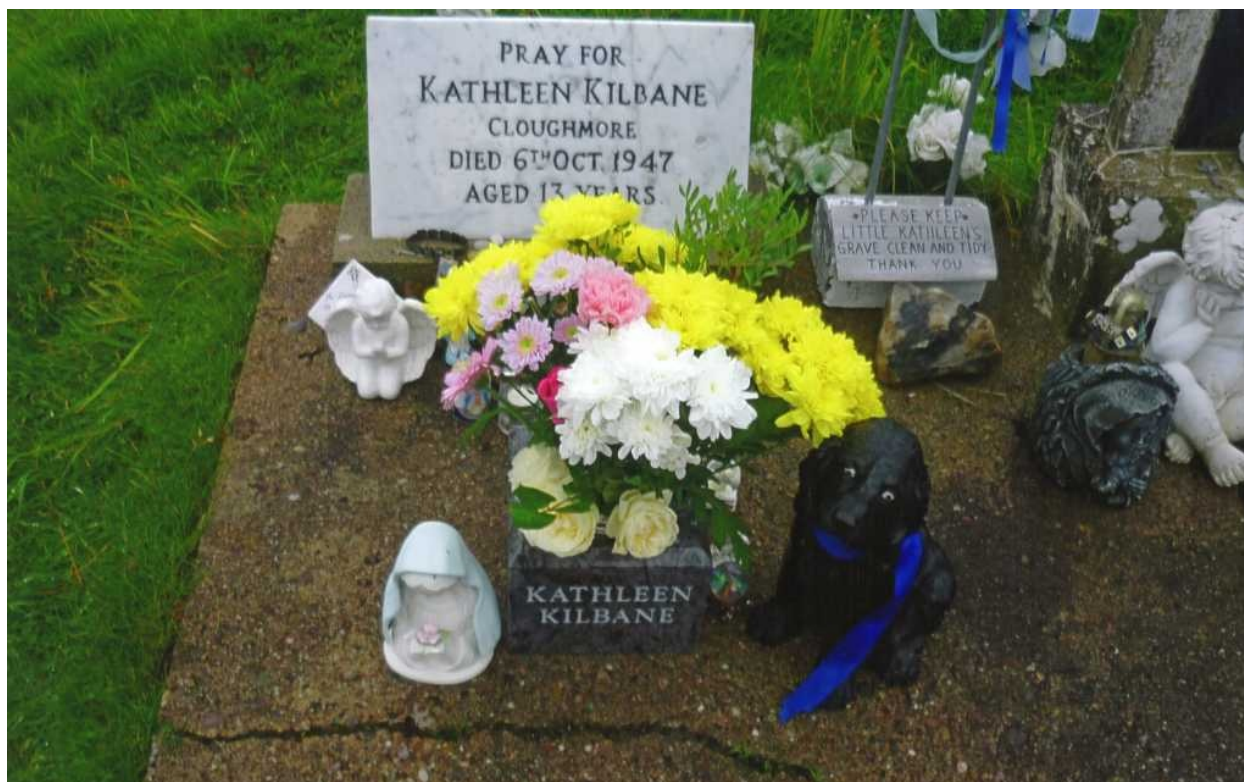
After so many failed attempts I turned and walked over to the Cong river behind me and as I looked into that dark silent flowing river I said a little prayer, "Dear Mother please make this work." As I turned Sophie was just walking into shot only this time the wind stayed calm and what you see in the film is what happened. I also remember the Chapel bell was ringing in Cong village at the time. It was 9am in the morning and for the first time in his life Dominic gave me the thumbs up sign, saying, 'I'm pleased with that.' Thank you Holy Mother.



The little statue and the Rosary beads you see Sophie place on the blanket had been blessed by our Priest for use in the film. They are now in Sophie's possession.

As Kathleen was Scottish we wanted to dress her in a tartan skirt and little shawl, complete with a St. Teresa medal around her neck. When we arrived at the Sanatorium where Kathleen died we could not believe our eyes. There outside the Sanatorium, on the roadway and in full bloom, were white roses. Dominic took the opportunity and filmed Sophie as she reached out, held a rose and sniffed it. That shot found its way into the film.

The following year my brother-in-law and I went back and bought three of those roses to Kathleen's grave. Why three? One for Kathleen, one for Brother Conway and one for George Devery, the 17 year old who was also befriended by Brother Conway and who also died at the Sanatorium in 1944. He rests beside Brother Conway in Ballinrobe.



Towards the end of the film 'Reflections of Kathleen Kilbane' you will see these three roses in the vase at Kathleen's grave.

Sophie's mother was also a great help. You see her in the Little Saint of Achill island film playing the part of the lady from Ballinrobe who made the jelly for Kathleen and went to the Sanatorium at Brother Conway's request to give Kathleen the motherly hug that Kathleen longed for so much. We see her again in the Kathleen Kilbane and Brother Conway film as the nurse at the Sanatorium and she read the beautiful testimony of Ann Wilson in 'Reflections of Kathleen Kilbane.'



Victor, Sophie and Bettina filming a scene at Creagh House, for the 'Kathleen Kilbane and Brother Conway' film.



Victor and Dominic filming a scene for the ‘Kathleen Kilbane and Brother Conway’ film.

20: Haydée's Story

By Haydée Copati

At the end of 2014, my neighbour, a young woman of 30 years old called Julieta told me she was pregnant. It would be her first child so naturally she and her husband were very excited.

Some months later, they found out that it was a girl. When I asked Julieta about the name of the baby, she told me some names they were thinking of and she then added: "We also thought about choosing the name Catalina." which is Kathleen in English. As soon as I heard this, from the bottom of my heart I felt the strong desire that the baby would be called after Kathleen Kilbane.

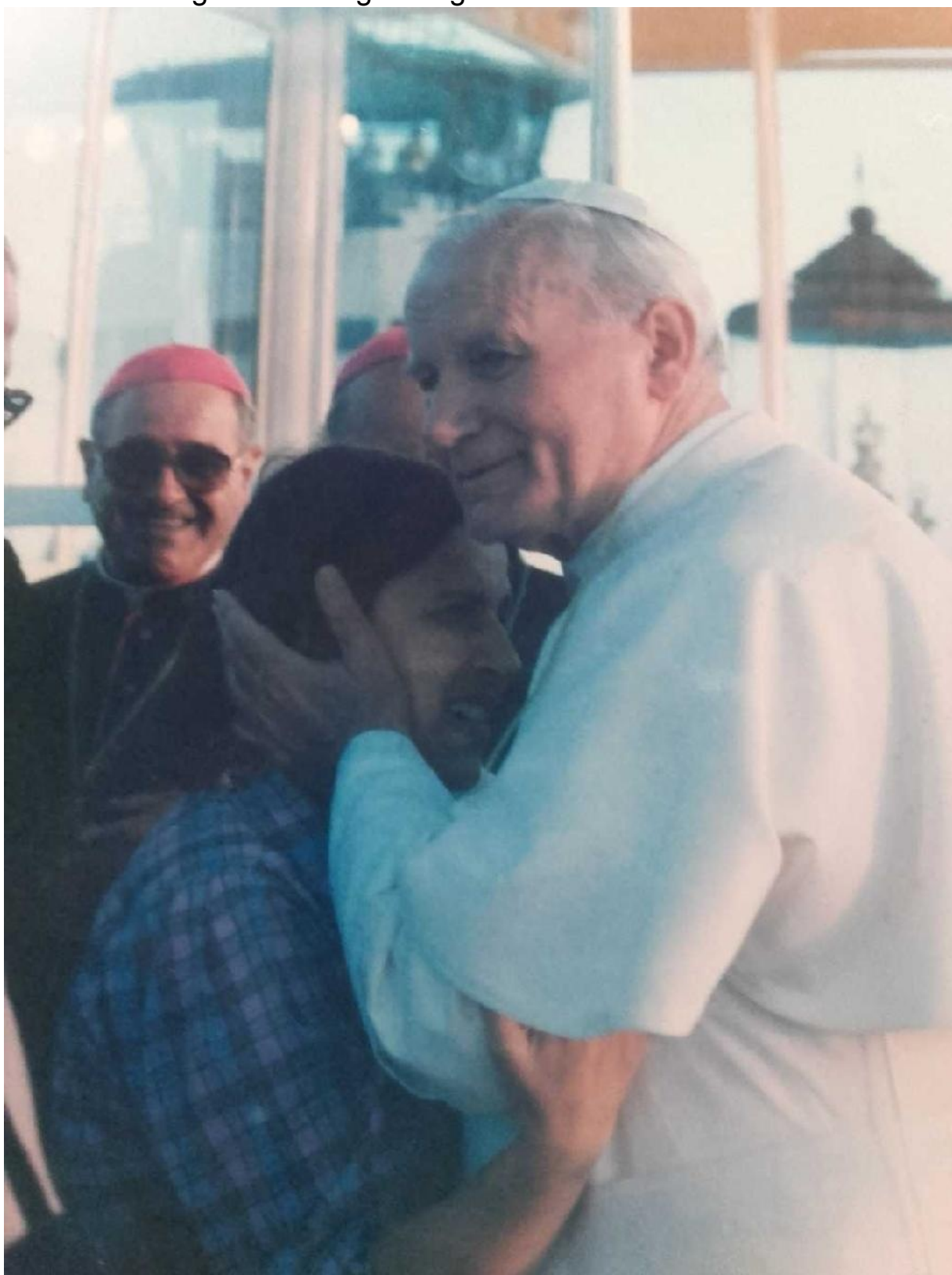
Some days later, Julieta told me that they had made up their minds and that the baby would be called Catalina. So, their beloved little girl was named while still in the womb. Deep inside I had the sensation that their decision had been due to Kathleen's, let's call it "influence," something quite 'natural' for me to believe as similar situations have happened more than once.

Catalina was born Tuesday, 9th June 2015 at 7 pm. Julieta and her husband couldn't believe their eyes, they were over the moon! But suddenly, Julieta became pale and, in a few minutes, lost consciousness. She was bleeding to death. She was rushed to the operating theatre.

After fighting for her life for 5 long hours, Julieta recovered, "miraculously." This is how the doctors explained the situation, the very word they used. As a consequence of that episode, Julieta won't be able to have more children, but she will live to see her beautiful Catalina growing up, the treasure girl who delights everyone who meets her.

I know that some people will find it difficult to see this story as a miraculous intervention of Kathleen. However, I do believe that it was. Julieta was saved thanks to Kathleen's intercession.

I consider it a grace coming through her.



Haydée with Pope John Paul II in Paraná, Argentina, 1987

Image courtesy of Haydée Copati

21: Brother Conway, A Gentle Man

By C. L. O'Briain, edited by Dominic Kennedy

That there is a certain amount of paradox in the lives of most of us is probably an aphorism, but in the case of Brother Conway it was uniquely true. Here was a man of simplicity and innocence combined with a high degree of academic sophistication; a lover of children, especially the ailing young, who was also a learned explicator of atomic theory; a dreamer yet a man of action; the sceptical scientist who wrote children's stories and held deep religious convictions.

Maurice Conway was born on 27th March 1901 to parents Kathleen (nee Salmon) and James Conway. He was named after his maternal grandfather, Maurice Salmon. His childhood was spent on the small family farm near the village of Grange in west County Waterford with the view from the front door of Youghal Bay.

Maurice was soon joined by a younger brother, James and sister Kathleen. On the 9th September 1916 at the age of 15 he began on his journey towards becoming a Christian Brother. After six months' postulancy he was received into the novitiate on St Patrick's Day, 1917, given the name Brother Anselm (which was said he never liked) and spent the next 2 years at St. Mary's College, Marino, Dublin where the Christian Brothers received their teacher training.

His first post after finishing college was to Dingle, Co. Kerry on 28 December 1918, having made his first vows three days earlier. Then another move in 1924 to the Christian Brothers School in Synge street, Dublin. A school which saw quite a few famous Irishmen pass through its doors; Eamonn Andrews (born in Synge street) Gay Byrne, Noel Purcell, Jack MacGowran, (Feeney in The Quiet Man) Milo O'Shea and David Kelly – most memorable as the Irish builder in Fawlty Towers.

It was here that he made his public definitive commitment to God in the religious life on Christmas Day 1926.

Next on his apprenticeship tour of schools was Our Lady's Mount in Cork city in 1928. Then it was off to Monasterevan in County Kildare the following year. He followed that up with a spell at Cahirciveen in County Kerry, a post he took up on the 31st January 1931. He didn't stay long there either and he finally settled a year later at Tralee in the same county, a post which held on to him for 11 years, before his fateful and destined arrival in Ballinrobe in 1943, a town he was to call home for the rest of his life.

Brother Conway had a natural rapport with children and it was not an uncommon sight to see him traipsing the streets of Tralee with a flock of children by his side. He had the rare ability to bring himself down into their miniature, innocent world and talk to them as equals.

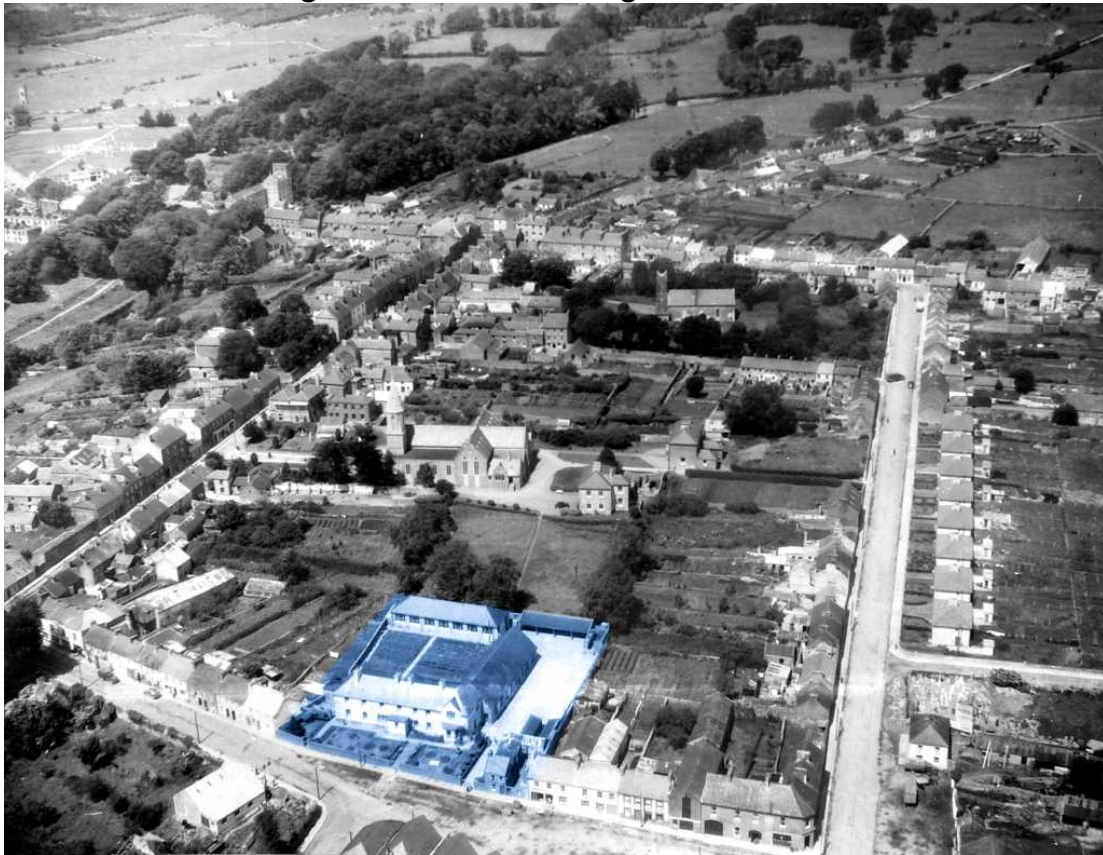
He liked to write short stories, romances being a particular favourite, which he wrote into a large copybook and illustrated with picture cuttings taken from books and magazines. It was this love of writing which made his decision to write about Kathleen the best and most obvious thing he could do to keep the memory of her alive and to share her story with his friends.



Could the book Brother Conway is holding be one of the copybooks in which he wrote his short stories?

It is not surprising that on the occasion of his death, almost 40 years later, that enquiries made by some of his past pupils in Tralee, asked if it was 'their' Brother Conway who had died.

In August of 1943 Brother Conway was appointed superior of Ballinrobe, a small market town near the shores of Lough Mask in County Mayo. It was said that he was a breath of fresh air after the rigidity of his predecessor. He was a natural teacher and derived a great deal of satisfaction from his vocation. His 2 favourite subjects were maths and science, which he taught with outstanding success.



Aerial view of Ballinrobe, taken in the 1950s. The area highlighted in blue is the school where Brother Conway taught.

Image courtesy of John Murphy, Ballinrobe (flickr.com)

It wasn't long before he was visiting the patients at Creagh Sanatorium and it was here that he met the young man, George Devery, who lies buried beside him at Ballinrobe cemetery. When George died in March of 1944, and as he had no family to speak of, it was Brother Conway who

saw to it that he was buried locally and he persuaded Brother Jerome McKinney, some-time superior of Letterfrack, the school George had previously attended, to pay for a headstone for his grave.

After 3 years as Superior, he resigned his post, as this kind and gentle man found that the exercise of authority needed for the job, did not come naturally to him. He much preferred teaching the boys of Ballinrobe and helping out in the community.

He has been described by his friends as a unique man who loved his daily Mass and community prayer. He involved himself wholeheartedly in the community, whether it was organising Irish dancing lessons for the children of Ballinrobe, visiting the sick, resurrecting the then defunct brass and reed band or holding a weekly film show. Well into his retirement he still went to the school at which he had taught and helped out in the school-yard, manned the book shop, dished out food in the canteen, took care of the heating arrangements and cleaned the toilets. No task was ever too humble for him.

He was unobtrusive, ever charitable and his quiet voice was never known to utter a harsh word. He had a habit of telling a story and failing to deliver the punch-line. When asked what happened next, his usual answer was, 'Well, I came away then.'

He had a remarkable penchant for making friends, often as the result of a casual meeting. On one particular occasion while travelling by bus, one of the passengers, the wife of a captain of one of the Guinness tankers, became ill. Conba (as he was affectionately known) ministered most sympathetically to her and they became close friends. On their last visit to Ballinrobe to see him, they arrived only to learn that he had, sadly, passed on.

Brother Joe Bannon, who was his superior for six years, described him thus; "I can still see him going about his many daily duties, always serene, at peace with himself and always with time for others, teachers or pupil. I would consider this wonderful willingness to live for others as one of the great hallmarks of the man all through his life. His cheerful

commitment to the small things of life stemmed from a heart that found time and space for God and neighbour. At times his rather quaint and unconventional manner and conversation belied the great sincerity and fully human qualities that he possessed in abundance. As brother or teacher, bursar or band-manager, he gave his one hundred per cent response, even when ailing health, congestion of lungs, poor circulation and other bodily ailments afflicted him."

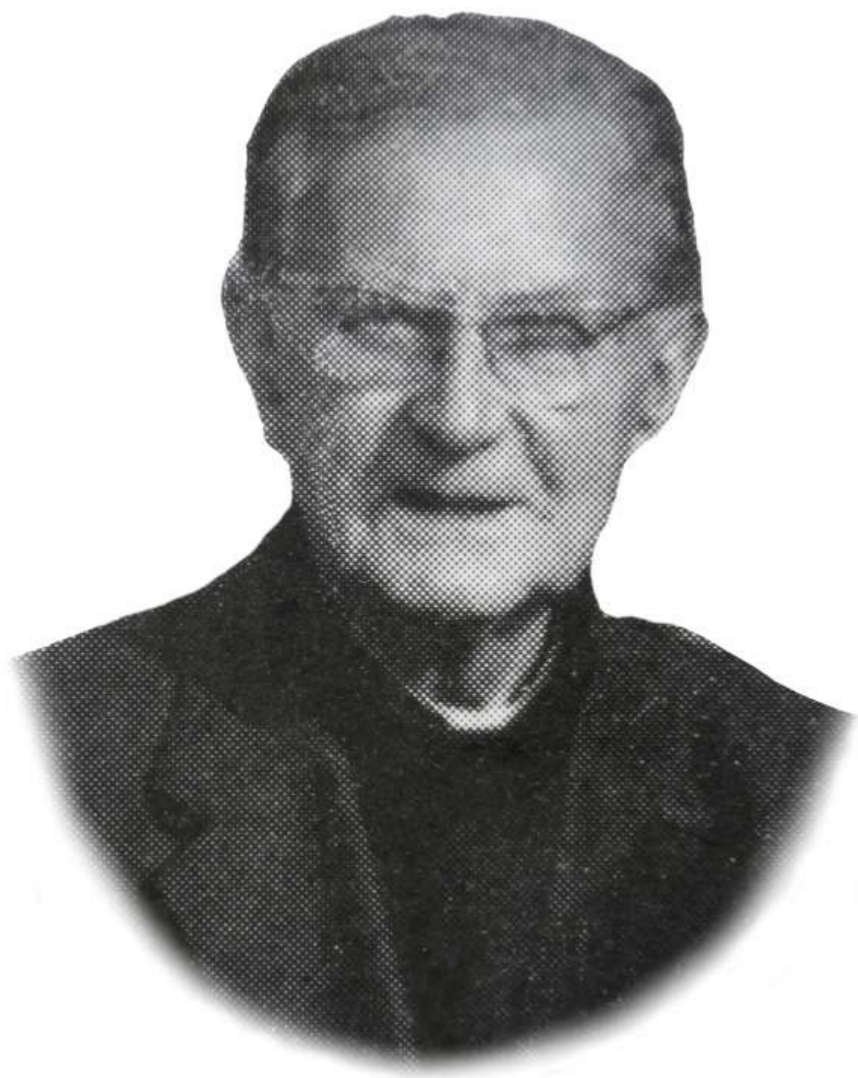
Brother Paddy McShane, who provided the perfect foil to Conba during his years in Ballinrobe, writes: "I first met Anselm Conway in September 1960. He was a soft-spoken man with smiling eyes. He was the lucky possessor of an inward happiness that externalised itself in many ways. When listening to music he would spend many a happy hour with one leg resting on the other and his foot beating time. No matter how I tried, I could never imitate it. He seemed to have a ball and socket joint where his ankle was. He also showed me a notebook full of songs written in tonic solfa. He liked playing the flute. He said that he hoped to play them all on his retirement. His love for children was legendary. He knew every child by his or her name, and always had a few sweets in his pocket to give to them. He had a wonderful insight into the minds of children. This is evident in his writings, especially in 'The Story of Margaret' a fictional work about an orphan girl and the ensuing battle for her custody. His was a beautiful, simple and childlike soul.

"He used to make periodic trips to Dublin. I am told that he would stand in O'Connell Street and watch the crowds go by. He loved the noise of pneumatic drills, and would stand for hours just listening to the noise. On one of his visits to Dublin, I asked him to bring back a budgerigar for the cook to keep her company. It duly arrived minus the tail! Apparently some children saw the box on his knees and wanted to know what it contained. He opened the box and the bird escaped. The children had a wonderful time trying to catch it, which they duly did, minus the tail. He was most apologetic, but said he and the children had had a wonderful time."

On 16 September 1966, he celebrated his golden jubilee. Following the jubilee mass a reception was held in the Hermitage Hotel, Taum, where the Brothers gathered to honour him. The townspeople put on their own celebration for him in the local Railway Hotel and presented him with a

transistor radio, an apt gift as he always had a keen interest in pop music, just one of his many qualities that had endeared him to successive generations of children. Ten years later he celebrated his diamond jubilee in 1976 with Mass in the community room and luncheon at a local hotel.

Because of his abiding interest in science and his skill and dedication in passing on his love of the subject to his pupils, Ballinrobe seems to have produced more chemists than any other town of its size in Ireland. His past pupils hold him in very high esteem and deeply appreciated what he had done for them as pupils of the school. They spoke of Brother Conway as one who gave himself totally to their educational interests and well-being. The many letters, photographs and memoriam cards found among his possessions is proof of the affection and esteem in which he was held by his former pupils and their parents, and of their deep gratitude to him for his caring, attention and advice. Long after they had grown up and scattered to their various avocations, many of them continued to correspond with him.





Photographs courtesy of Thomas Treacy, Ballinrobe

Brother Conway's time on earth came to an end on the 12th November 1982. The previous evening, Mrs Walsh the housekeeper noticed that he wasn't in his usual form. She urged him to go and see the doctor, but he declined, saying it wasn't bad enough to be annoying the doctor with. It wasn't until his superior, Brother Paddy Ryan threatened to call the doctor and get him to come out, that Brother Conway relented. After his visit to the doctor and a prescription picked up at the chemist, he seemed to be feeling better. The superior visited him in his room to check that he was alright.

The next morning it was found that he had died peacefully in his sleep. The news spread and the townspeople mourned his loss. It was only the day before that he was seen around town and in fine spirits. He was laid out in the Christian Brothers monastery in Ballinrobe. The Brothers in Youghal were contacted and they passed on the sad news to Brother Conway's sister, Kathleen and his brother, James. Kathleen was able to make it to Ballinrobe for the funeral, but James was too ill to attend. Kathleen passed away in 1983 and James died in 1984. They both had never married.

During the wake an endless stream of people came to pay their respects and to pray. Former pupils of Brother Conway carried the coffin to the church. It was only fitting that he be buried in Ballinrobe, beside his friend from so long ago, George Devery.

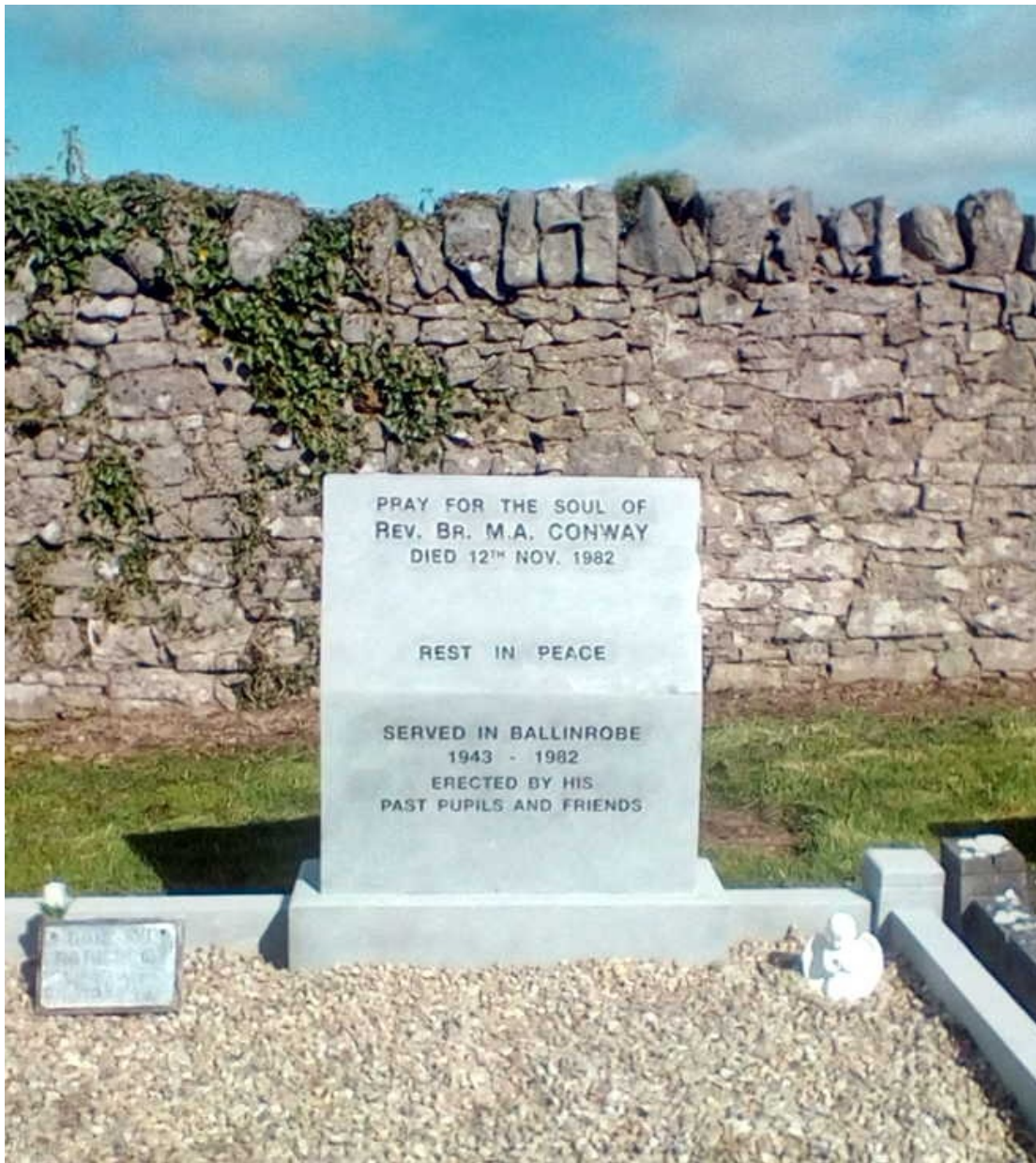
The funeral Mass was offered by Father Billy Feighery, an ex-pupil of Brother Conway, home on holiday from Africa. His con-celebrate was Father Dan O'Connor from the town of Swords, who had met Brother Conway the previous year on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. As was to be expected the church was filled to the rafters and the local school of Irish dancers formed a guard of honour. They wept openly at the graveside.

Messages of sympathy were received from all over the world, from ex-pupils and friends. They can be summed up in the tribute paid by another past-pupil priest, Father Tom Leyden, who wrote: "As another of the many who have been shaped and influenced by Brother Conway, I would like to share his death with you all. Some individuals touch their environment in profoundly lasting ways. Brother Conway was such a person. He has long since lived in the Lord's company."

Brother Maurice Anselm Conway (1901-1982) by C.L. O'Briain, first appeared in the 'Christian Brothers' Educational Record.' Reproduced here with the kind permission of the Christian Brothers.



Brother Conway's grave and next to him is George Devery's grave at Ballinrobe cemetery. Picture taken in 2013



Bro. Conway's grave, Spring 2017



Members of Ballinrobe Town Hall Committee presenting an inscribed silver salver to Brother M. A. Conway, who retired recently. The presentation was made in the Town Hall where Brother Conway was former chairman and committee member for 44 years. Front: L. to r. s. B. Murphy, Sister Christina, Sister Mary, Mr. Christopher Murphy. Back: Bro. S. Bannon, Tony Jennings, Secretary; P. A. Mott, Chairman; Bro. M. A. Conway, Brendan Sweeney, Tom Treacy, Bro. L. McNamara. Pic.: FRANK DOLAN.

Photograph courtesy of Alma Murphy, Ballinrobe



Kathleen and Brother Conway Prayer card

Dear Kathleen and Brother Conway
I am humbled by your holiness
But I come to you as I'd come to friends.
Pray that I might reflect the same Christian
Love you had for each other and for all.
And that I may be inspired by your shared
love for the Mass and the Holy Rosary.
Obtain for me the graces from God I ask
through your intercession
.....name your intention here.....
Amen

Superintendent Registrar's District Limerick Registrar's District Thringhill

BIRTHS Registered in the District of Thringhill in the Union of Limerick
in the County of Waterford

No.	Date and Place of Birth	Name (if any)	Sex	Name and Surname and Dwelling place of Father	Name and Surname and Dwelling place of Mother	Name and Surname of Informant	Signature, Confirmation, and Residence of Informant	When Registered	Signature of Registrar	Signature of Registrar
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
196	1901	Thringhill	F	James Bridge	James Bridge	James Bridge	James Bridge	1901	1901	1901
197	1901	Thringhill	F	James Bridge	James Bridge	James Bridge	James Bridge	1901	1901	1901
198	1901	Thringhill	F	James Bridge	James Bridge	James Bridge	James Bridge	1901	1901	1901
199	1901	Thringhill	F	James Bridge	James Bridge	James Bridge	James Bridge	1901	1901	1901
200	1901	Thringhill	F	James Bridge	James Bridge	James Bridge	James Bridge	1901	1901	1901
201	1901	Thringhill	F	James Bridge	James Bridge	James Bridge	James Bridge	1901	1901	1901
202	1901	Thringhill	F	James Bridge	James Bridge	James Bridge	James Bridge	1901	1901	1901
203	1901	Thringhill	F	James Bridge	James Bridge	James Bridge	James Bridge	1901	1901	1901
204	1901	Thringhill	F	James Bridge	James Bridge	James Bridge	James Bridge	1901	1901	1901

BIRTHS REGISTERED IN THE DISTRICT OF THRINGHILL IN THE UNION OF LIMERICK IN THE COUNTY OF WATERFORD

I, James Bridge, Registrar of Births and Deaths in the District of Thringhill in the County of Waterford, do hereby certify, that this is a true and correct copy of the Register of Births and Deaths in the District of Thringhill in the County of Waterford, for the year ending on the 31st day of December 1901.

Witness my hand, this 10th day of January 1902.

James Bridge Registrar.

I have examined the above, and compared it with the said original Register of Births and Deaths, and hereby certify that it is a true copy.

Witness my hand, this 10th day of January 1902.

James Bridge Superintendent Registrar.

Brother Conway's Birth Certificate

Certificate courtesy of irishgenealogy.ie

CENSUS OF IRELAND, 1901.

(Two Examples of the mode of filling up this Table are given on the other side.)

FORM A.												No. on Form B. 5	
RETURN of the MEMBERS of this FAMILY and their VISITORS, BOARDERS, SERVANTS, &c., who slept or abode in this House on the night of SUNDAY, the 31st of MARCH, 1901.													
Serial Number.	NAME AND SURNAME.		RELATION to Head of Family.	RELIGIOUS PROFESSION.	EDUCATION.	AGE.	SEX.	RANK, PROFESSION, OR OCCUPATION.	MARRIAGE.	WHERE BORN.	IRISH LANGUAGE.	If Deaf and Dumb; Blind; Imbecile or idiot; or Lunatic.	
	Christian Name.	Surname.											
1	Maurice	Salmon	Head of Family	R Catholic	Cannot Read	70	M	Farmer	Married	Waterford	Irish & English		
2	Mary	Salmon	Wife	R Catholic	Cannot Read	68	F	Farmer's Wife	Married	Waterford	Irish & English		
3	James	Conway	Servant	R Catholic	Read and Write	26	M	Farmer's Servant	Married	Waterford	Irish & English		
4	Bridget	Salmon	Daughter	R Catholic	Read and Write	22	F	Domestic Servant	Married	Waterford	Irish & English		
5	Maurice	Conway	Son	R Catholic	Cannot read		M		Not Married	Waterford			
6													
7													
8													
9													
10													
11													
12													
13													
14													
15													

I hereby certify, as required by the Act 63 Vic., cap. 6, s. 6 (1), that the foregoing Return is correct, according to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Martin Corbett Constable (Signature of Enumerator.)

I believe the foregoing to be a true Return.

Maurice Salmon (Signature of Head of Family.)

Witness Martin Corbett Constable

Conway family Census, 1901 & 1911

CENSUS OF IRELAND, 1911.												No. on Form B. 4	
RETURN of the MEMBERS of this FAMILY and their VISITORS, BOARDERS, SERVANTS, &c., who slept or abode in this House on the night of SUNDAY, the 2nd of APRIL, 1911.													
Serial Number.	NAME AND SURNAME.		RELATION to Head of Family.	RELIGIOUS PROFESSION.	EDUCATION.	AGE (last Birthday) and SEX.	RANK, PROFESSION, OR OCCUPATION.	PARTICULARS AS TO MARRIAGE.			WHERE BORN.	IRISH LANGUAGE.	If Deaf and Dumb; Blind; Imbecile or idiot; or Lunatic.
	Christian Name.	Surname.						Completed years of marriage.	Children born alive.	Children living.			
1	Maurice	Salmon	Head of Family	Roman Catholic	Cannot Read	75	Farmer	Married	34	4	6	Waterford	Irish & English
2	Mary	Salmon	Wife	Roman Catholic	Cannot Read	76		Married				Waterford	Irish & English
3	James	Conway	Servant	Roman Catholic	Read & Write	38	Mason	Married				Waterford	Irish & English
4	Bridget	Conway	Daughter	Roman Catholic	Read & Write	45		Married	11	3	3	Waterford	Irish & English
5	Maurice	Conway	Son	Roman Catholic	Read & Write	10	Scholar	Single				Waterford	Irish & English
6	James	Conway	Son	Roman Catholic	Read & Write	9	Scholar	Single				Waterford	
7	Estherine	Conway	Son's Daughter	Roman Catholic	Cannot Read	7	Scholar	Single				Waterford	
8													
9													
10													
11													
12													
13													
14													
15													

I hereby certify, as required by the Act 10 Edw. VII, and 1 Geo. V., cap. 11, that the foregoing Return is correct, according to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Andrew Dunne Leon (Signature of Enumerator.)

I believe the foregoing to be a true Return.

Maurice Salmon (Signature of Head of Family.)

Witness Andrew Dunne Leon

Courtesy of The National Archives of Ireland

22: The Brief Life of George Devery

By Dominic Kennedy

Resting beside Brother Conway in the same grave plot at Ballinrobe cemetery is George Devery. As mentioned previously in this book, we know that George was a young man that Brother Conway befriended at Creagh Sanatorium where he was being treated for Tuberculosis.

George was born on 3rd August 1926 in Blackrock, Dublin. His mother, a Miss B. Devery, bore him out of wedlock. Nothing is known about his father, but it is safe to say he had no interest in marrying Miss Devery or in his son.

We know that at the age of five in 1931, young George was apprehended by the authorities and charged with 'receiving alms.' It seems his mother had abandoned him to the streets of Dublin. We don't know what became of her, apart from the information that in 1938 she was living in London.

George was placed in the care of the Sisters of Charity at an Industrial School in Kilkenny, where he spent the next six years. He was transferred to Letterfrack Industrial School, County Galway in 1937. He was discharged from Letterfrack in August 1942 to work on a farm in Glenisland near Castlebar.

At some point in the following year he contracted Tuberculosis and was sent to Creagh (St. Teresa's) Sanatorium. It was there that he met and became friends with Brother Conway.

George died on 9th March 1944. His remains were placed in St. Mary's Church, Ballinrobe. As we already know, Brother Conway arranged that he be buried in Ballinrobe cemetery and on the day of his burial, 20th March, four Christian Brothers, including Brother Anselm, walked in formation behind George's coffin with 50 schoolboys behind them and 4 of the senior boys carrying the coffin along the public road to the cemetery. Thirty-eight years later Brother Anselm Conway was laid to

rest beside him.



George and Brother Conway's graves, Spring 2017

Image courtesy of Allan Worthy

23: Jeremy's Story

By Jeremy Clifford

My name is Jeremy Clifford and I was born in Bristol, England. My recently deceased father, Patrick came from Co. Kerry in Ireland. We were both devoted to little Kathleen Kilbane, always praying to her, because, like Kathleen, my father had TB in his 20s, but he survived.

I remember well just before he passed away in January 2016, as he lay with his eyes closed I said to him, "Dad, little Kathleen and the Blessed Virgin are watching over you."

"I know they are." he whispered. "I can see them."

Just after dad had left this world, a strange thing happened. My sister Mary and I were walking to Dad's grave and there before us, lying on the ground, was a solitary white rose. Beautiful thoughts of Kathleen came into our minds and we know she was with us.

It was Mary who picked up the rose and we placed it on a nearby grave.

A short time before my sister Janet passed away in 2004, aged 47, she gave me an Irish half crown. Little Kathleen was given an Irish half crown by a stranger before she died. But she never knew what its value was, because she never had the experience of money and had no use for it. Always thinking of others, she gave it to Brother Anselm.

When I was given the Irish half crown by my sister, there were tears in the eyes of us all. Thank you, Kathleen.



Stills from the film, Reflections Of Kathleen Kilbane, where Jeremy's story of the fallen rose is re-enacted.

24: Kathleen Burke's Story

By Kathleen Burke

My name is Kathleen Burke from Hollymount, Co. Mayo. I am now in my late eighties and when I was about sixteen I was a member of the Legion of Mary in Ballinrobe town. As part of our Legion activities we used to visit the Sanatorium in Creagh near Ballinrobe with Brother Anselm Conway or another adult member if he wasn't available. We brought books to the adults, but were not allowed too close to any of them. We brought sweets, 'peg's legs' (an Irish rock candy) for Kathleen, and Brother Conway would always pass them on to her.

He sat on her bed every evening. We would have played with Kathleen, but were not allowed. One evening a lady in the town gave me a nightdress to bring to her. I gave it to Brother Conway and he said that she danced around in it when she got it, as if it was the finest gown. She was remarkable, full of the joys of life and we, as teenagers, never had any indication that she was so ill.

Brother Conway always believed that she was special. We were sympathetic towards her being there at such a young age and he always said that she was happy.

I feel truly privileged to have had the opportunity of being in her company several times. Brother Conway did give me a handwritten copy of the book 'No More Tears In My Eyes' but I lent it out so often that it never came back to me. I have been trying to recall if there was anyone else from around here that may have called to visit her and I can only think of one other living person who came with me and now lives in England.

25: You Have Made a Real Friend for Life

By Victor Kennedy

Dear reader, as you get to know more about Kathleen's life you will find yourself wanting to visit her grave in Achill. I think you will find it a very moving experience. Talk to her about all your troubles. Spend some time with her and you will find a peace come over you.

And while you're there you could visit the little roofless church just across the road in the other part of the cemetery. You will notice a stone Altar and on that Altar there are many pebbles left there by people over the years, in memory of those who perished of hunger during the Irish famine of 1847.

A lot of their graves are dotted all around the church, marked by large stones. There are also graves under the floor of the church. People, sometimes, when they visit a grave and they have nothing to leave, they leave a little stone pebble, perhaps even a coin, as has been left at Kathleen's grave.

Even as I write this, thoughts of little stone pebbles remind me of the early 1960's, the cold war was at its height, a dark cloud hung over the world. Within the walls of the Vatican in Rome, plans were underway with great anticipation to prepare a new Vatican Council. Against this background a Heavenly visitor came to a little remote village high up in the Cantabrian mountains in Northern Spain in the village of San Sebastián de Garabandal. That visitor was Saint Michael the Archangel.

He had come to four young children, all girls, three of them still alive today, to tell them to be prepared for a visit by the Mother of God. The rest is history. Grave warnings were given to the children concerning the world and the Church. Among them the fact that 'less and less importance is being given to the Eucharist.'

That was 56 years ago and you don't need me to tell you the state of the world today. I like to dwell on the many beautiful things that happened

there. Such as the nice way the girls blessed themselves, a joy to behold – all caught on film. Of how the children, having nothing to offer the Holy Mother, picked up little stone pebbles and offered them up to her to kiss, which she did according to the children. Again, all caught on film.

Amongst the items left on a table by the people present for the girls to offer to the Holy Virgin to kiss, were Rosary beads, wedding rings and a ladies powder case. How could the Holy Mother kiss such an item of vanity? She could because it was learnt afterwards that the powder case was used to transport the Holy Eucharist during the Spanish Civil War.

Priests there took note that while the children in ecstasy were saying the Rosary, they added the words, 'and Our Mother' after 'Holy Mary Mother of God.' Even now I add in these words when I say the Rosary. For Mary is not only the mother of Jesus, she is our Mother also.

Having been a Protestant for the first 24 years of my life, I never really heard Mary's name mentioned, unless it was the name of my girlfriend Mary who then became my wife, and for whom I converted to Catholicism. How beautiful is the Catholic faith.

So if you arrive at Kathleen's grave and you don't have a white rose or a blue ribbon with you, just leave a little stone pebble in the wooden box set there for that very purpose. And Kathleen, being a simple girl, will be more than pleased with you. And as I said in the very first film we made about Kathleen, 'You have made a real friend for life.'



Image courtesy of Malachy Rogan

26: Poems Inspired by Kathleen

'What Kathleen Means to Me' by Noelene Beckett Crowe of the Ballinrobe Historical Society.

I am deeply indebted to Bro. Anslem Conway for his insight in recording his encounters with the patients he visited at Ballinrobe Sanatorium. Due to these precious diaries we can empathize with this special little girl whom he befriended. One's eyes may well up with tears as one reads of this extraordinary little person's life. We can appreciate her kindness, her gifts, her promise plus her wonderful miracle of the beautiful white rose. Her love of a blue ribbon, her written letters, also her contribution to the many suffering patients during this phase of her short life has been her legacy.

Blue Ribbon

A precious child who
Survived childhood sorrows
Incurable illness, loneliness
Yet contributed with her
Daily kindness, happiness
Her friendships to enrich all
Who learn of her story with
Tremendous peace, love, beauty.

Why Am I Here?

by Victor Kennedy

White walls around me
Beds standing in a row
Nurses are busy, moving to and fro
Why am I here, what have I done
I miss my granny, please take me home.

Then suddenly a ray of light shone through
I opened my eyes, and it was you

God told me last night, that he would send
A Holy man, to be my friend.



Kathleen shows Bro. Conway picture given her by Canon Fergus

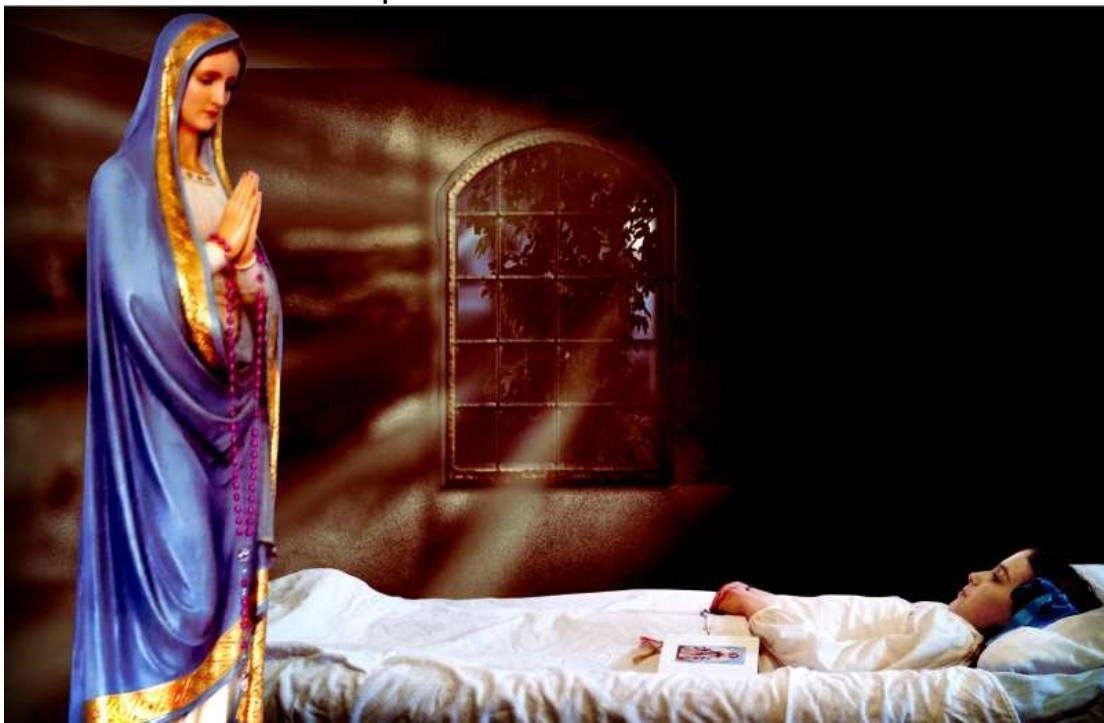
Happy days we spent, I forgot my pain
So please don't go away, again.

Thank you for the green pen you sent me today
I can now write letters, in my own awkward way.
Will you bring Roscoe to see me
for he too is my friend
Just to hold his paw and to pat his head

And he can sleep with me, beneath my bed.

I feel the pain coming back again
Nothing feels the same
The Virgin Mary is at my bed
And she is calling my name.

Stay with me till the very end
And thank you again for being my friend
I hear singing now from Heaven on high
Please plant the white rose after I die.



Kathleen lays on her deathbed, the Virgin Mary watches over her

Footprints on Achill shore

By Victor Kennedy

It was on that calm October morn
Just after the break of dawn.

At the Chapel I called in to pray
What happened then will stay in my mind
Until my dying day



For at the Altar rail a child knelt in prayer
With her face like the shining sun
All I could do was to stand and stare
At the wide blue ribbon that adorned her hair
As her eyes met mine she began to fade away
But it was not before she had this to say;

"It was to you I came back, just to let you know
That I am with you always, wherever you go.

Yes, the sun shines bright on the other side
So please take my hand and walk with me
For I am just a child you see.
And, as I rest here now, in pain no more
You will still find my footprints on Achill shore
At my graveside I will say to you;
‘If you bring me nice ribbons,
please make them blue.’
And if you cry, I will cry with you.

And the rose that blooms here now,
will be forever more,
My memory of you beside Achill shore.”



Still from the film, Kathleen Kilbane and Brother Conway

They buried me here in Cloughmore

By Victor Kennedy

They buried me here in Cloughmore by the sea
But it was in Ballinrobe I wanted to be.

The heavens opened that day
and the rain poured down
on the small number of people
that had gathered around.

Many years now have come and gone
The world has got worse, as it has moved on.

Now people leave flowers here, for all to see
But it's your prayers that mean much more to me.

And if you light a candle in the Chapel
Please will you light one for me
And you will find me beside you
As I always will be.

And if you need me, just call my name
I haven't changed, I am just the same.

I hear soft words at my grave again
People are praying, and they speak my name.

Hail Mary's I hear, it's a beautiful rhyme
For they are saying the Rosary one more time.

Evening shadows fall across my grave
As another day draws to a close.
And if you come again tomorrow
Please bring me a white rose.

An Errand for Jelly

By Allan Worthy

As the Brother left Creagh
Its lights glittered in the gathering darkness.
The tree lined lane afforded no protection.
The merciless Atlantic wind
Lashed him with thorny rain.

The dark silhouetted man
Walked with sure purpose of heart.
He felt no fear
Walking in his Master's footsteps.
He too had looked into the eyes of a hungry child.



Still from the film, Kathleen Kilbane: The 'Little Saint' of Achill Island

Beads in the Night

By Allan Worthy

Darkness in the sanatorium.
The rustle of starched uniform and footsteps in the corridor.
Hushed and distant voices.
Nurses talking.
“A quiet night tonight”.

Pain kept her awake again.
In the hours that slowly crept towards dawn.
No lonely vigil she kept as the beads slipped through her fingers.
One more time.





Kathleen Kilbane
The 'Little Saint' of Achill Island
Novena

For private devotion only

NOVENA TO KATHLEEN

O Kathleen, your faith and love have touched the hearts of many.

You promised that, "if anyone hears about me and likes me," you will, "help them always to be good."

You said, "That is what I love to be doing, always helping people."

O 'Little Saint' of Achill Island intercede for me to obtain the intention I recommend to you.

...mention intention here...

Through your acceptance of suffering obtain for me acceptance in faith of all the afflictions of this life.

Intercede for the Church, the Pope, conversion of sinners and souls in purgatory.

Inspire in me the love you have for the Blessed Virgin.

Help those who are dear to me and those who are alone and have no one to pray for them.

**Kathleen Kilbane
Pray for Us.**

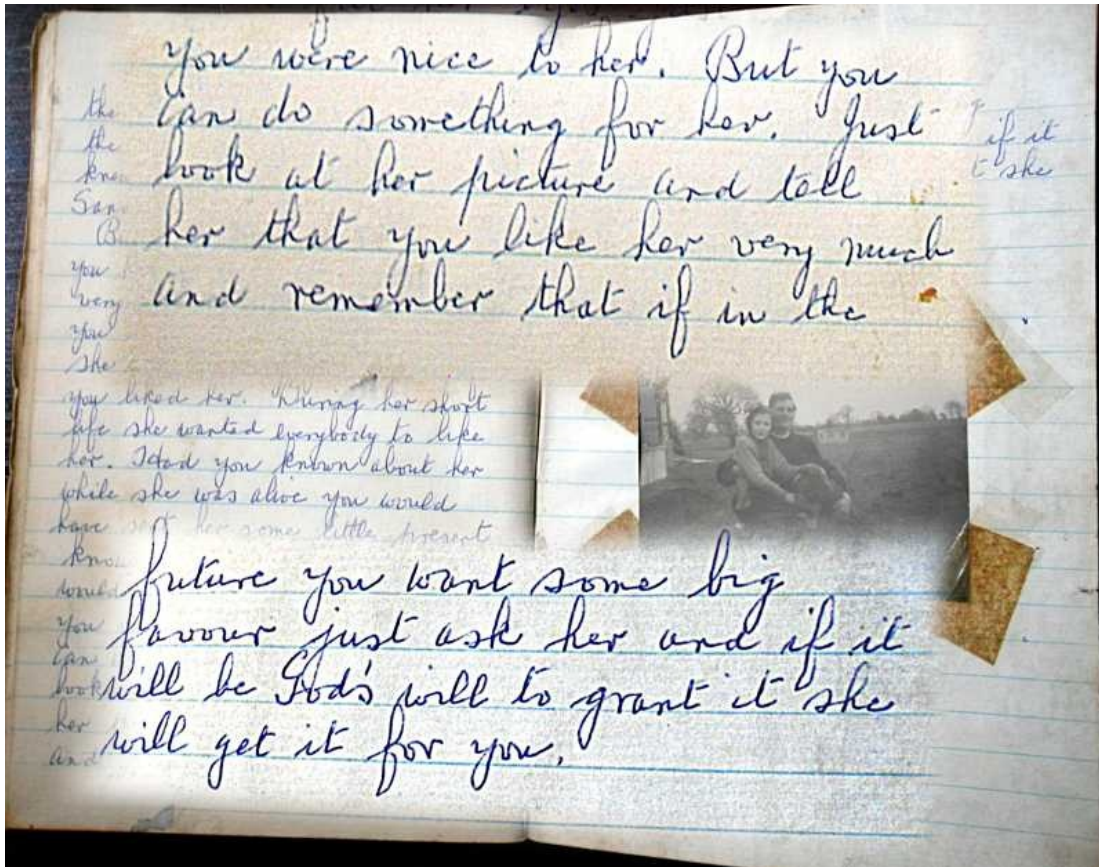
Please send information of help and graces received through Kathleen to:

**Victor Kennedy, 13 Glastry Road,
Kircubbin, Newtownards, Co. Down
N.Ireland BT22 1DP**

or email: bantonye@gmail.com

Afterword

Brother Conway leaves us with these words at the end of his handwritten book about Kathleen.



But you can do something for her. Just look at her picture and tell her that you like her very much and remember that if in the future you want some big favour, just ask her and it will be God's will to grant it, she will get it for you.

Can You Help?

Our aim is to make this book part of ongoing project to gather information on the lives of Kathleen Kilbane and Brother Anselm Conway.

Can you help? In the future we are hoping to publish a second volume of Kathleen Kilbane: 'The Little Saint' of Achill Island'. We are looking for any information such as memories your parents or grandparents may have about Kathleen and Bro Conway. Was a relative or friend a patient or nurse at Creagh Sanatorium when Kathleen was a patient there? Did Bro Conway teach you in school? If so we would love to hear from you.

Do you have in your possession one of Brother Conway's stories? Mentioned in his biography is, The Story of Margaret. And in 'No More Tears in My Eyes' in Kathleen's letter to Brother Conway she thanks him for the book he gave her, about Pat the little black pig. Was this a story Bro Conway wrote? Or do you remember a children's book from the time which featured a little black pig called Pat?

Do you have in your possession letters written by Kathleen, or know where to obtain them? We would love to be able to reproduce them in the second book to share with our readers.

Kathleen's fellow patients mentioned in 'No More Tears in My Eyes' are, Rita, Mary Fallon, Mrs Burke and Mrs Lavelle. Are you a relative or friend? We would welcome any information you can supply us with.

We would also welcome accounts on how Kathleen has touched your lives after reading Bro Conway's moving account of her life. We would also welcome any poems or artwork that have been inspired by Kathleen or Bro Conway.

Please contact us at the following address:
Mr Victor Kennedy
13 Glastry Road
Kircubbin
Newtownards

Co.Down

N.Ireland

BT22 1DP

Or email: bantonye@gmail.com

Acknowledgements

The authors of this book would like to warmly thank those people who allowed us to publish their personal stories of how Kathleen has affected their lives; Sister Philomena Gunning, Kathleen O'Rourke, Patricia McAuley, Noirin Gannon, Mary Gannon, Joe Mulvihill, Viviana Fretes, Haydée Copati, Jeremy Clifford, Kathleen Burke and Noelene Beckett Crowe a local Historian who, apart from helping us research parts of the book, contributed a poem about Kathleen as well.

We would also like to thank those people who have helped us in researching this book, finding out various facts and information for us, allowing us to use images, documents in their possession etc; Pauline Briody, Michael Coyne, Very Rev Martin Canon Drysdale, Ann Gallagher, Brother Christopher Glavey C.F.C, Ivor Hamrock & Richard Hickey at the Mayo County Library, Maureen McGreal, Alma Murphy, John Murphy, Brendan Murray, Mary-Jo O'Keeffe, Martin & Margaret O'Malley, Michael Patten, Malachy Rogan, Sister Bernadette Ryder, Provincial Archivist of the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul, Father James Thompson and Thomas Treacy.

A special thanks to Bettina Ebert Kennedy for proof-reading and suggesting improvements. And to Sophie Kennedy for playing the part on Kathleen on screen. And to Fr Brian McKevitt OP for bringing Kathleen's story, as written by Br Conway, to the world.

